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Peers' revolt wins TV sports victory

By ARTHUR LEATHLEY
ALEXANDRA FREAN
AND ALICE THOMSON

BROADCASTING of top sporting events on BBC and ITV was guaranteed last night after the Lords defeated the Government in a campaign to prevent them going exclusively to satellite television.

World Cup finals; the FA Cup final; the Scottish FA Cup final; Wimbledon finals weekend; and the Olympics.

The Lords ignored appeals from Virginia Bottomley, the National Heritage Secretary, to wait for the results of consultation, and instead delivered one of the biggest government defeats in the Upper House in recent years. Ministers conceded that there was no chance of the amendment to the Broadcasting Bill being overturned in the Commons, but they claimed that the Government was relaxed about it.

subscription television channels will not be able to buy exclusive live rights to the events. It would extend to satellite stations such as British Sky Broadcasting the present restrictions which prevent pay-per-view channels buying exclusive rights to the events.

International, owner of The Times BSkyB failed last month in its attempt to buy the rights to the Olympic Games up to 2008, but it has expressed no interest in bidding for exclusive rights to any of the domestic events.

John Bridgeman, the director general of Fair Trading, decided to refer a £304 million five-year agreement, the biggest in British sports history, and a subsidiary one, in which the league agreed to award the rights for a further five years to the two companies, if either matched any other broadcaster's offer.

They can't just charge on as if nothing has happened. However, ministers admitted that they expected a backlash from some big sports bodies which have campaigned to be allowed to conduct their own negotiations with broadcasters, without being constrained by legislation. Some senior sports executives are likely to protest that a decision has effectively been taken before the three-week consultation process is complete.

Debate, page 10
New channels, page 27

Exit Sid with gas split-up; exit Cedric on £367,000 a year

By ROSS TIEMAN AND PHILIP WEBSTER

SID, the archetypal small shareholder eagerly pursued when British Gas was privatised ten years ago, is being told that he is not wanted any more now that the company is to be split up.

Such investors are to be encouraged to cash in their shares because the chairman, Richard Giordano, says it would be "inappropriate" for the new supply company, British Gas Energy, to have a register of 1.8 million names.

The rebuff came as Mr Giordano outlined his plans for the division of British Gas - and immediately plunged the company into a new controversy over its chief executive's pay.

Cedric Brown, whose 71 per cent pay rise in 1994 marked the "fat cat" row about boardroom greed, is to retire in April with an annual pension of £247,000, a chauffeur-driven Jaguar, a secretary and a £120,000-a-year consultancy contract.

The deal prompted rowdy exchanges in the Commons yesterday. The Prime Minister insisted that the package was a matter for shareholders, but Tony Blair challenged him to say whether he thought it justified, given the doubling of customer complaints and the division of the company because of potential losses.

He contrasted British Gas's

action with Michael Heseltine's remarks apparently condoning the late payment of bills to business creditors as "one group of hard-working people told to wait for their money, the other given licence by the Government to print it."

Away from the Commons, Mr Brown was having a difficult confrontation with journalists who demanded to know whether he was being pushed out. He insisted: "It is my decision to retire," adding: "I believe that to a very large extent, the task I set myself has been completed."

However, he admitted that it had not been pleasant over the past 15 months, since his pay rise was announced in the middle of a massive job-shedding programme.

Mr Brown will now hand over his role as chief executive to Mr Giordano, but will continue to work for the company virtually full-time. "He is there to do the demerger," a spokesman said.

Provided shareholders approve, British Gas will be divided into two independent companies next year: British Gas Energy (BGE) will serve its 19 million customers while TransCo International will own and operate the pipelines.

Investors will be given free shares in BGE, but Mr Giordano said it would be inappropriate and costly for the new company to maintain the huge share register of its parent, so advisers were aiming to make it easy for small shareholders to sell.

One option being studied would see investors with small packages of shares being invited to sell their holdings on a no-fee basis, or at very low commissions, to Cazenove, the company broker. Cazenove would then sell on the shares on large packages to institutional investors.

Free shares, page 25
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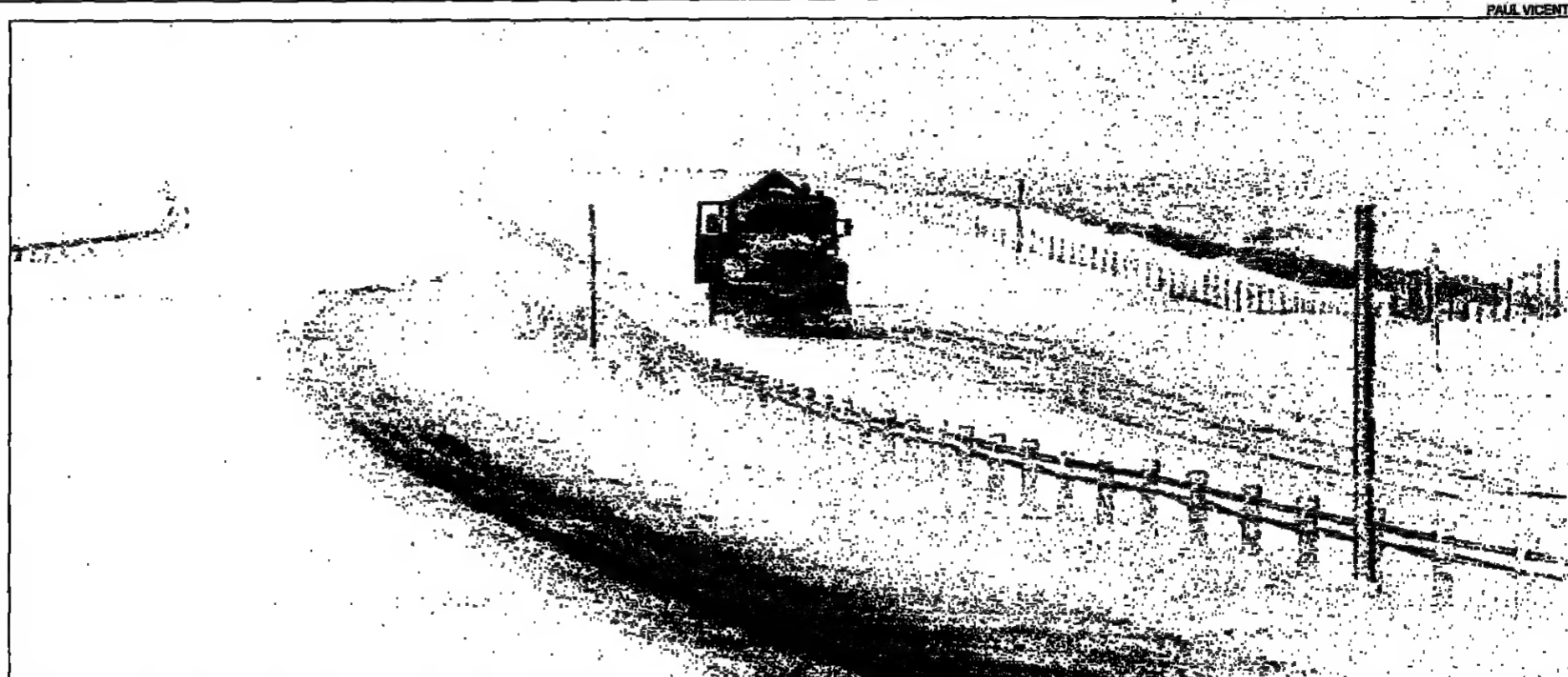
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A lonely snowplough struggles to clear the A66 trans-Pennine road yesterday. The AA said of conditions in Cumbria and the Borders: "There are more roads closed than open"

Hundreds of drivers stranded in snow chaos

By RUSSELL JENKINS
AND STEPHEN FARRELL

MUCH of Britain was paralysed yesterday by some of the heaviest snowfalls for 50 years, with motorists stranded for a second night in their cars, hundreds of schools shut and thousands of homes without power.

A state of emergency was declared in Dumfries and Galloway, in the Borders, where 24 inches of snow fell in 36 hours. The council co-ordinated emergency services

from an underground nuclear bunker. Territorial Army officers boosted the rescue services trying to reach motorists stranded overnight. About 1,000 motorists were trapped in their cars in Dumfries.

A man whose daughter was stranded in her car near Lockerbie became so desperate that he tried to hire an RAF Sea King helicopter using his American Express platinum card. The company, which boasts a personal service to platinum holders, tried to rent a private helicopter from Glas-

gow Airport at 2am. When none was available, it tried to hire a Sea King, which costs £5,000 an hour, from RAF stations at Lossiemouth, Boulmer and Kintess.

It was told that the RAF does not send out its rescue helicopters except at the request of the police. "To the best of our knowledge this is the first time anybody has tried to hire us with a credit card," an RAF rescue co-ordination centre official said. "It would have been nice if we had been able to say 'That will do nicely' and rent

them a helicopter, but it was impossible." The woman spent 24 hours in her car before police officers reached her.

The AA described Cumbria and the Borders as a "no-go" zone for motorists, with most roads blocked. The M74, the main road between Carlisle and Glasgow, became a giant lay-by as about 1,000 cars and lorries were abandoned. The AA said: "There are more roads closed than open."

way and another 15,000 in South Wales were without power after blizzards brought down electricity lines.

Scotland, Wales and western and central England bore the brunt as temperatures fell to -7C (19F). A second cold

front is forecast to unleash freezing rain or fresh snowstorms over southern and central England and East Anglia later today.

Travel chaos, page 3
Forecast, page 24

Riot warning

There could be riots in the streets if the welfare budget were cut overnight, Kenneth Clarke warned Tory right-wingers, as he mapped out a gradual path to reducing state spending. He quoted the recent disruption in France as a warning. Page 2

New test plans

Gillian Shepherd, the Education and Employment Secretary, is asking her curriculum advisers to consider introducing formal tests for nine-year-olds in an effort to counter widespread alarm about primary school standards. Page 5

Jury dodging 'must stop'

By JILL SHERMAN, POLITICAL CORRESPONDENT

MEMBERS of the professions will no longer be able to evade jury service under Labour plans to ensure that fewer criminals are let off.

Jack Straw, Shadow Home Secretary, intends to stop people avoiding jury service by citing business commitments, holidays or minor illness. The automatic exemption of some professions - including MPs, peers, doctors, dentists, nurses, vets and chemists and anyone in the armed forces - will also be

reviewed. He believes that juries - which are supposed to be selected at random - no longer reflect the community and are "skewed" towards the working class and the unemployed who are often unsympathetic to the police and more likely to acquit criminals.

Mr Straw points out that under present "loose practice", professional people can avoid being jurors, particularly for long trials, by arguing that they cannot take time off work.

Business commitments and holidays are listed as reasons for exemption, as well as illness and physical disability. He unveiled new figures disclosing that in some courts more than one-third of people asked to serve on juries avoided service.

Mr Straw also wants to revise the list of professionals who have the legal right to be excused, if they wish. A number of people are automatically banned from serving on

Continued on page 2, col 5

Olympic hopeful breaks legs in car crash

By CRAIG LORD
SWIMMING CORRESPONDENT

THE Olympic dreams of one of Britain's brightest young swimmers have been shattered by a head-on car crash in which she broke both legs.

Alex Bennett, who will be 19 in two weeks, was injured on her way to a training session on Monday. She underwent ten hours of surgery at the Queen's Medical Centre in Nottingham and will be unable to compete at the British Olympic trials to be held at Sheffield next month.

The Commonwealth gold medalist had postponed going to university as she concentrated on preparing for the Atlan-

ta Olympics in July. She had been training for 20 hours a week and was driving to one of her regular evening sessions at Bechdale Baths in Nottingham when the accident happened on the A612 between Thurgarton and Lowdham in Nottinghamshire.

She awoke yesterday to the news from her parents, Roger and Chris, that she has metal pins and plates in both legs, one hip, one foot and one ankle. One of her kneecaps was also reconstructed and she suffered cuts to her face. Although still breathing oxygen through a mask, she joked that they should tell her coach, Bill Furniss, "that I'll be a bit rusty when I come back".

Her mother said yesterday: "She's

alive and that's lucky, that's what counts. They did all the surgery in one go and Alex has been awake quite a lot but I don't think she quite realises yet just how long a recovery she's in for." She said her daughter was emotionally "still pretty stable".

Mr Furniss said last night that she was the "kind of girl who will be back in six months, where it would take others a year".

Miss Bennett was a national champion at 400m freestyle and a former butterfly champion who won a gold and two silver medals at the Commonwealth Games in 1994 as a member of the England relay teams, for medley and freestyle. She first competed for England at the age of 13.



Bennett underwent all surgery in one go

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Truth under the covers: how a young MP kept his modesty

"I've slept with over 100 boys!" declared Peter Luff (C. Worcester) to the House yesterday. A lady tourist, ushered by chance into the Strangers' Gallery as Mr Luff spoke, dropped her jaw in amazement. So all those stories about Tory MPs were true! It really was as bad as the tabloid newspapers said! She struggled to her seat and sat down. Composing herself, she looked up, resuming her attention to the debate.

Luff warmed to his theme. "I was gagging," he cried,

renewed horror clouding the tourist's gaze, "to see how we'd compare to a bunch of lecherous lads out looking for a bit of skirt action!"

Our spectator was now thoroughly confused. Was it skirt action the MP for Worcester sought, or another kind of action? Or both? Was he one of these — what was the word? — bi-axial (or was it bi-focal?) politicians? Only last Wednesday, a press release from the BBC had promoted the Corporation's coverage of the Doncaster bi-election: maybe

MPs like this were elected at bi-elections?

Sadly, the truth was duller. Our tourist had missed the early part of Peter Luff's speech in support of his Bill on "Periodicals (Protection of Children)". Luff was not offering shock personal testimony; he was quoting from the magazines his Bill sought to improve. Madam Speaker braced herself as Luff announced: "Men unzipped: an intimate guide to men's minds (and bodies)". She flinched at his declaration "Boys in the



MATTHEW PARRIS
POLITICAL SKETCH

Buff — shots so hot we sealed the pages." She gripped the arms of her chair at the promise "Red hot! Sizzling male model posters inside."

In fact, young Mr Luff, fresh-faced and earnest, made his case well. His aim was to oblige teenage girls' magazines to declare what age range they were written for.

This, he believed, would be a discipline for editors and a guide to parents. He accepted the strength of the argument for freedom of publication, and answered it.

Speaking without preachiness, and allowing that modern teenagers did need more open discussion of sex (and at an earlier age) than had been

thought proper when their parents were young, Luff's success proved what so many MPs seem to miss: that a case made carefully and without theatricality, an argument which acknowledges objections instead of ducking them, a theme expressed without pandering to the extremism of some supporters, can be the more powerful for its modesty. Luff's case was essentially for honest packaging rather than for censorship, and very hard to oppose.

This did not stop the Liberal

Democrats' dynamic and likeable Simon Hughes (South-west & Bermondsey) from opposing it. Opposing a Ten Minute Rule Bill is the only way any MP other than its proposer can get in on the act. Luff's theme will provide a number of radio and television opportunities in the weeks ahead. Broadcasters will be looking for an interested MP to put another view. Now they know where to look.

Mr Hughes was one of the few (among many anxious to speak) called in the much-

broadcast 1994 debate on the homosexual age of consent. Opinion divided between proponents of 21, 18 and 16 as the right age. Hughes won his platform by moving an amendment proposing 17.

Yesterday, it is possible he was driven by a deeply felt objection to Mr Luff's proposals. It is possible that pigs will fly. It is possible that a day will come when Mr Hughes says something interesting. Yesterday was not the day.

Leading article, page 19

Clarke warns that welfare cuts could lead to riots

By NICHOLAS WOOD, CHIEF POLITICAL CORRESPONDENT

SLASHING the welfare budget overnight could lead to riots in the streets, Kenneth Clarke warned the hardline Tory Right yesterday as he mapped out a gradual path to reducing state spending.

Reform of the £90 billion-a-year social security budget would inevitably be a lengthy process, the Chancellor said. Measures in hand were saving £5 billion a year and winning broad public support. But precipitate action could have disastrous consequences. "You cannot expect to get to grips with a burgeoning social security bill overnight," he said. "The recent events in France, riots on the streets of

Paris, illustrate the social disruption which sudden reforms can bring."

Mr Clarke's remarks were a rebuttal to rightwingers such as Norman Lamont, his predecessor, who, at the Tory conference in October, called for the transfer of large parts of the social security system to the private sector and new ways of funding health care.

Some rightwingers believe that Britain will be able to compete internationally only if it is prepared to make room for decisive tax cuts by dismantling the welfare state and ending free health and education. Rejecting this view, Mr



Clarke said: "I believe that we can have modern public services and, at the same time, be a low tax economy."

The Chancellor's remarks, at the London School of Economics, were also designed to kill off speculation of a rift with John Major over public spending and place the Chancellor in the mainstream of

Tory thinking over tax, spending and the welfare state. In a speech agreed between the two men after a flurry of reports alleging tensions in Downing Street, the Chancellor reaffirmed his determination to reduce public spending to "below 40 per cent of gross domestic product". He said he expected to

achieve that important milestone by next year and would then go further. His remarks were in line with Mr Major's "aspiration" of spending at 35 per cent of GDP. "The Prime Minister and I have both said that we will achieve that target and we have both said that we will then aspire to reduce it further," he said. Spending at

42 per cent of GDP was down on its previous peak of 43.5 per cent in the recession of the early 1990s, 45.5 per cent in the early 1980s and 47.25 per cent in the mid 1970s. The Chancellor said he expected state spending to remain broadly flat over the next three years.

Peter Riddell, page 10

Forces to keep ban on gays

By JAMES LANDALE
POLITICAL REPORTER

THE ban on homosexuality in the Armed Forces is to remain in force, it emerged yesterday. Michael Portillo, the Defence Secretary, will announce the decision later this month when the MoD publishes a long-awaited internal review of the policy. The move will come as a huge relief to service

chiefs who have been fighting a two-year battle to prevent any relaxation in the law.

However, the decision will almost certainly prompt a clash between the Government and the European Court of Human Rights. Four former servicemen and women who were dismissed for their homosexuality have taken their cases to the European Court after their legal chal-

enge was rejected by the Appeal Court last year.

Although ministers have accepted the view of defence chiefs that homosexuality is incompatible with service life, they emphasise that the decision is not a moral judgement but a question of operational efficiency. They are understood to have rejected compromise proposals for a so-called "don't say, don't tell" policy.

Exhaust test suspended

CHECKS on exhaust fumes from thousands of "green" cars have been suspended after widespread discrepancies were found in the new MoT pollution test. The Transport Department admitted yesterday that it had told 18,000 MoT stations to suspend the special emissions test introduced to examine cars with catalytic converters.

German states in move to ban British beef

By ROGER BOYES IN BONN AND MICHAEL HORNSEY

GERMAN provincial governments were heading for a confrontation with Britain and the European Court of Justice last night after moving to ban all imports of British beef. The news was greeted with outrage by beef farmers.

In a renewed scare over BSE — bovine spongiform encephalopathy, the so-called mad cow disease — a ban has already been announced in Rhineland-Palatinate. It is likely to be adopted by all Germany's 16 regional states, which are angry at the way the issue of suspect cattle imports has been handled by the federal government.

Rhineland-Palatinate's ban is complete and will be strictly enforced. Every beef delivery in the region will have to be accompanied by a certificate stating that it is not of British origin.

Klaudia Martinez, the province's environment minister, said yesterday the ban was imposed out of frustration at "18 months of inactivity by the Federal Government".

The campaign against British beef in Germany has been gaining ground over the past few weeks. German scientists, such as the respected Professor Heino Düringer of the Robert Koch Institute, have been advising that mad cow disease can be transmitted to humans, though Britain has always insisted that there is no scientific proof.

"Anyone who has been studying the pattern of infection between the most varied of mammals cannot deny that there is a relationship between

BSE and Creutzfeldt-Jakob disease in humans," the professor said this week. Widespread publicity has also been given to reports suggesting that controls at British slaughterhouses are inadequate.

Sir David Nash, the president of the National Farmers' Union said at the union's annual conference in London yesterday: "I am appalled and horrified that a country which professes to be the most pro-European in the EU is taking illegal action which has no scientific justification and will only damage their own beef industry."

Martin Burt, chairman of the NFU's livestock committee who raises beef cattle near Whitby in Yorkshire said: "It is a disgraceful situation. We have been bending over backwards to make British beef as safe as possible. What more do we have to do to convince the Germans?"

A spokesman for the Ministry of Agriculture said: "This is a matter for the German government and the European Commission. Any unilateral ban by Germany would be unlawful and we are sure that the European Commission will take the appropriate action."

A German ban would have little immediate effect. Last year Germany imported more than 200 tonnes of British beef. But if other EU states, such as France, which imported 80,000 tonnes of British beef in the first nine months of 1995, followed the German example the effects would be serious.

Universities press on with £300 charge

Universities are pushing ahead with plans for a £300 signing-on fee after being offered no long-term funding reform yesterday by Gillian Shephard, the Education and Employment Secretary. Mrs Shephard met vice-chancellors to try to defuse the dispute over university budgets, which led them to threaten a levy for students starting in 1997.

Professor Gareth Roberts, chairman of the Committee of Vice-Chancellors and Principals, welcomed a move by Mrs Shephard to investigate the effect of cuts in last November's Budget. But he added: "On the crucial issue of longer term funding, Mrs Shephard provided no reassurance." Mrs Shephard promised further proposals before the vice-chancellors meet again on February 16. They hope these will amount to more than another inquiry. Letters, page 19

Solicitors in legal limbo

Tens of thousands of solicitors in England and Wales are working in legal limbo, without a practising certificate, because of the failure of a £2.5 million computer system at the Law Society. The society is now in breach of the law because it has failed to discharge its core functions under the Solicitors Act 1974 of issuing certificates within 21 days of receiving a solicitor's application and accounting for the £50 million in fees paid by the applicants.

MoD sells top homes

The Mount in Gibraltar, worth more than £5 million, is among 31 homes that are earmarked for sale after a review of official service houses and senior officers' entertaining requirements. The Mount has a staff of 12 and cost £37,500 to maintain over two years. The MoD said that occupiers of the 44 surviving residences would have their full-time staff, including cooks and gardeners, cut from 234 to 108. Residence staff cost about £5 million a year.

Hostage radio appeal

Relatives and friends of four Britons held hostage in a remote jungle region of Indonesia yesterday appealed for their release in a broadcast on the BBC World Service. There has been no news of William Oates, Daniel Sturt, Annette van der Kolk and Anna McIvor, all Cambridge University students, for ten days. Maarten van der Kolk, father of Annette, 21, said: "Whatever the cause, we urge Kallik Kwallik [the rebel leader] to make contact and free them right away."

Man held over murder

Detectives were questioning a man last night over the kidnap and murder of Diana Goldsmith, whose disappearance in January last year after she dropped her three children at school has remained a mystery. The 28-year-old man was arrested in southeast London after an appeal by Kent police on the anniversary of the incident. The body of Mrs Goldsmith, 45, former common-law wife of the multi-millionaire investor Derek Goldsmith, has not been found.

Lorry driver jailed

A Belgian lorry driver who was falling asleep behind the wheel when he crashed to death a motorcyclist was jailed for three years yesterday for causing death by dangerous driving. Relatives of the victim, Charles Mitchell, condemned the sentence on Eddy De Meersman, who pleaded not guilty. He had driven more than 600 miles in breach of European Union regulations when he crashed on the A1 near Newark, Nottinghamshire.

Sunbeds death warning

A skin specialist criticised the use of sunbeds after the death of a Dublin man who had 70 per cent burns. Sean Kelly, 39, who had the skin condition psoriasis, died in hospital on Monday of a heart attack. It is understood he had three minutes on a health club sunbed on January 22 and returned next day for a second session of unknown length. Dr Gillian Murphy, a consultant at Beaumont Hospital, Dublin, said: "Nobody should use sunbeds. They are unnecessary."

Threat to royal firemen

Two of Britain's best-known volunteer fire brigades, at Gordonstoun school and Balmoral, are under threat from local authority budget cuts, it was claimed yesterday. The Fire Brigades Union said that Grampian fire service was being forced into a £1.6 million spending reduction which would mean the closure of six of its part-time fire stations. One of the brigades is based at the Queen's holiday home and is manned by 20 workers on the Balmoral estate.

5 things you didn't know about life after death.

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- 2 The average mortgage-linked life policy covers the house but will rarely provide for the family.
- 3 The average family spends more than £800 a month.
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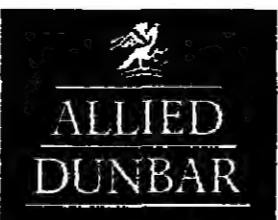
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ETP



For the life you don't yet know

Straw's jury plan

Continued from page 1
juries such as lawyers, policemen, the judiciary, those with a criminal record, the mentally ill and the clergy. Anyone else between 18 and 70 is qualified to serve on a jury provided they are on the electoral roll. But self-employed people also wriggle out of jury service, by failing to put their names on the electoral register. They argue that the subsistence allowance, a basic £44.80 a day, does not compensate for loss of earnings.

"Jury service should be brought back to being an obligation that everyone has to fulfill," Mr Straw told *The Times*. "The fact that some people can avoid responsibility has quite significant practical consequences because you get juries that don't properly reflect society and may be more prone to acquit people."

Mr Straw would tighten up the law to require people to do jury service when asked, rather than giving jury officers total discretion over whether to accept excuses. He points out that in 1988 the law was relaxed making it easier for people to get out of jury service by asking for it to be deferred.

The jury summoning official can also use his discretion to excuse people altogether. A prospective juror is told that the trial will last about 10 working days, but if the trial is expected to be longer the juror will be asked at court if this would be difficult.

Figures produced by the House of Commons Library show that the number of acquittals in contested cases before Crown Courts has risen in recent years. In 1986-87 half the cases resulted in acquittals, but in 1994-95 this rose to 60 per cent.

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Scotland cut off as snow wreaks travel chaos



The scene in Crawshawbooth, Lancashire, yesterday. Left: A woman was flown to hospital in Dumfries after going into labour. Rescue helicopters replaced ambulances to move patients both north and south of the border



A snow leopard at Marwell Zoological Park

Thousands marooned in worst drifts for years

By STEPHEN FARRELL
GILLIAN BOWDITCH AND
KATE ALDERSON

THOUSANDS of people spent a second night stranded on the roads as rescue workers battled to clear drifts from roads blocked by the worst snow for years.

Territorial Army trucks will this morning join the effort to help drivers stuck in the Lockerbie area of Dumfries and Galloway.

Scotland was virtually cut off as 1,000 vehicles - 400 cars and 600 lorries - were left abandoned on an 18-mile stretch of road on the main Carlisle to Glasgow route.

In northern England, motorists driving north through Cumbria were told to turn back by police and told to spend the night in

emergency reception centres. Rescue helicopters both north and south of the border were used to ferry patients unable to move by ambulance.

One Royal Navy rescue helicopter from Prestwick picked up a Dumfries woman who went into labour with twins. It also took a pregnant woman from Stranraer and a four-week baby in an incubator from Ayr to hospital. Another helicopter, from RAF Boulmer in Northumberland, took three kidney patients needing dialysis treatment to hospital in Carlisle.

Inspector George Graham, of Dumfries and Galloway Police, said 300 people had been put up at the Lockerbie police station, the largest of

seven centres. Twelve police four-wheel drive vehicles worked to bring frozen passengers through closed roads to hotels and hostels. Another six will join them from Nunfield Territorial Army Barracks today.

At Abington Welcome Break service station on the M74 in Lanarkshire, voluntary workers had to turn drivers away after their car park filled up. Police insisted the only people still left in their cars were lorry drivers with enough food and heat in their cabs to get out the problems.

Laura Blyth, who works at the Abington station, said they were coping well in the circumstances. "Some drivers are facing a second night here.

Many are sleeping in their cars and just coming in from time to time for provisions and amenities. We've provided people with food and warmth."

One motorist, Arthur Murrell, told of how he survived on a few Trebor mints as he waited to be rescued.

Another, Ewan Campbell, 33, his wife and 15-month-old daughter were stuck in their car for eight hours from Monday afternoon until 1.30am yesterday. "We had to give a berth to some of the lorries as they were swerving all over the roads as they tried to get traction on the ice," he said.

Mr Campbell, who was driving home to County Durham, was rescued by police and taken to the rescue centre at Moffat.

They like the hundreds of

RAF helicopter rescues 19 trapped on train

By JONATHAN PYNN
TRANSPORT CORRESPONDENT

RAILWAYS

AN RAF helicopter picked up 19 people from a snow-bound train yesterday as the weather caused havoc with rail services.

The Wessex rescue helicopter was called in when ScotRail's 7.02am service from Stranraer to Glasgow became stuck in a high moorland cutting near Girvan, about 45 minutes into its journey.

The aircraft, based at Aldergrove, near Belfast, was on a training mission and had landed at HMS Gannet, near Prestwick, when it was pressed into service to rescue the 16 passengers and three crew.

They were flown about ten miles to the village of Barrhill where they were given hot food at an hotel before being taken by road to Stranraer or

run by the two newly privatised rail operators, Great Western and South West Trains, were badly affected. Great Western had to provide a bus service for InterCity passengers between Exeter and Plymouth when sea defences were breached near Dawlish in Devon.

Railtrack blamed a combination of unusually high tides, storm-force winds and crumbling sandstone cliffs along the exposed stretch of track for the delay.

Commuter services run by South West Trains were left in chaos when five trains broke down early yesterday.

There were further delays and cancellations during the evening rush-hour as South West struggled to cope with the disruption caused by the three inches of snow that blanketed Hampshire and Surrey.

Search team saves rock climber stranded on Welsh mountain

By RUSSELL JENKINS
AND GILLIAN BOWDITCH

A ROCK climber was rescued early yesterday morning as he clung to a ledge on a 700ft frozen waterfall by his ice pick for more than 12 hours. The rescue party battled through driving snow on mountains near Dinas Mawddwy, south of Dolgellau in Gwynedd, to reach Charles Wallace, 47, of Coven, near Wolverhampton.

His cries for help were heard by a farmer, Wyn Jones, who was tending his sheep nearby. He alerted the Cwm ward bound Wales search and rescue team who made their way from Aberdovey to the Nant Maw Glasau Falls.

Mr Wallace was criticised by David Williams, 46, a Snowdonia Park warden and leader of the nine-man rescue team, for making fundamental errors. Mr Williams said: "First, he went solo in an area he didn't know and when he wasn't aware of the standard of climbing required. Second, if he had listened to the weather forecast he would

have known that the conditions weren't suitable."

It was lashing with snow. The climber had managed to drag himself off the ice on to a small frozen ledge, securing himself with an ice-axe. He had no torch and it was very difficult to hear him above the blizzard.

Mr Williams said that apart from being cold, the climber was not injured and had done all the right things once he became stuck.

In Cumbria, a solicitor was trapped in the heavy snow on Monday night three miles from Whitehaven. David Hammond, telephoned colleagues at his Sunderland law firm and told them he had been forced to wrap himself in newspapers to keep warm as he had no blankets or warm clothing with him. Yesterday colleagues said Mr Hammond still appeared to be missing.

Meanwhile, 50 disabled children and staff who were

trapped inside Mayfield School, near Whitehaven, on Monday night by deep snow-drifts were forced to sleep in the school building overnight.

All made it home yesterday. "These youngsters were very upset and, because of the nature of their disabilities, many have been unable to comprehend why they weren't allowed to go home last night," said Ann Greggain, chairman of the governors.

Thousands of other children enjoyed a day off from classes when their schools were closed for the day. Some were kept at home by their parents for the second day running. Schools were closed throughout the Dumfries and Galloway region in the Scottish borders, which suffered blizzard conditions.

In South Wales more than 120 schools and colleges were closed for the day. Another 250 schools were shut across Glamorgan, Clywd and West Wales. More than 60 schools

in Gloucestershire, most of them in the Forest of Dean, were closed after up to nine inches of snow fell.

Senior educationalists complained that the closures were the worst in 15 years and fear that the disruption to school work may go on for some days ahead.

Four robbers armed with an eight inch knife and a handgun stripped a man of his trousers and made him sit in the snow while they stole his belongings. He had to walk the two miles home in a blizzard without his trousers.

The 26-year-old was mugged in Eggbaston, Birmingham, as snow fell on Monday night. The attackers ran off taking his white trousers with them, £55 cash and a building society book.

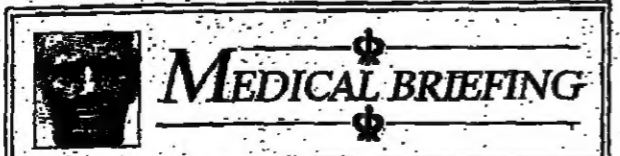
Police arrested a burglar after tracking him through the snow to his home. The man broke into a neighbour's garage and took a wheelbarrow, leaving tracks which police were able to follow to his house in a nearby road in Swindon, Wiltshire.

A survivor's guide to beating freeze

IN NORFOLK the winter of 1963 was nearly as bad as that of 1947. Returning from seeing a patient in the early hours, even my overpowered Mini Cooper fitted with snow tyres was unable to penetrate the drifts. Reacting a night in the snow I started to dig. In the distance I could see the local authority grilling lorry similarly stranded.

After hours of digging I was away and as I slithered past the lorry I saw that my old friend, one-eyed Kelly Hodds, the local roadman, was tucked up in the cabin, head covered with balachava as well as a hat, his hands with gloves and mittens, and he was wearing an ex-Army greatcoat over layers of pullovers.

The exhaust of the lorry was well above the level of the snow and with the heater on and his engine running he was as warm and comfortable as a bug in a bed. He wound down the window and shouted: "So sorry - I didn't see it was you doctor. If I had I



would have lent a hand." A true knight of the road.

The AA's advice is not to travel in the snow unless it is essential but, if it is, to take a shovel, blankets, a flask with a hot drink and chocolates or other calorie-rich snacks. When stuck, the association recommends that the snow from in front of all four wheels should be cleared, the wheels should be straightened and earth or sacking should be put beneath the back wheels and then cross your fingers and hope to get away.

Cold kills and as the body's temperature falls the intellect becomes blurred, decisions are unreliable and death may approach unnoticed. Heat has to be preserved. The AA

would have thoroughly approved of Kelly Hodds's precautions. Put on as many layers of clothing as is possible. Never forget that the clothed body loses not less than 25 per cent of its heat through the head, so that too should be covered. Drivers who venture out into blizzards should carry bin liners as mountain walkers do. A couple of bin liners with a hole cut in one for the head will keep anybody as warm as Mr Hodds. The principle is always that the more layers the better, with each layer of clothing looser than the one beneath it.

The AA recommends that when several cars are stranded passengers should move into one of them; the more

bodies there are huddled together the greater the heat generated. A scarf should be tied to the aerial to attract attention. Engines and heaters can be left running provided that there is a clear airway so that the exhaust fumes can be blown away.

The youngest and fittest should be sent out to brave the blizzard and the windchill factor. Ageing and obstructed coronary arteries are vulnerable to cold.

Hot soup is ideal sustenance, enhancing morale and providing a few calories. Chocolate is also excellent. Alcohol is a mistake, it may make life seem better for the stranded traveller but it increases the rate of heat loss. Do not touch metal parts of the car with bare hands. Contact with cold metal at very low temperatures soon causes frostbite.

DR THOMAS
STUTTAFORD

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There is a slight risk that upon opening, you may find that small fragments of glass are present. The affected bottles are green with a white and green label and are all 25cl, intended to be supplied in packs of 10.

As a precautionary measure, please take any un-opened bottles bought before 7th February, back to the shop from which they were bought for a full refund.

We apologise for any inconvenience caused. Grolsch in "stubbies" will be back on sale at your normal supplier in the near future, clearly marked as "OK" stock.

In case of difficulty, please contact our Consumer Help Line on Freephone 0800 371166. Lines open 8.00am - 6.00pm, Monday-Friday.



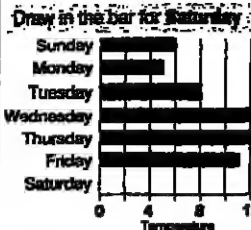
LIKELY MATHS QUESTIONS FOR A NINE-YEAR-OLD

Question 1
This is a list of the highest temperatures each day for one week.

DAY	TEMPERATURE
Sunday	6°C
Monday	5°C
Tuesday	8°C
Wednesday	12°C
Thursday	13°C
Friday	11°C
Saturday	7°C

How many degrees warmer was it on the hottest day than on the coldest day?

Here is a chart of the temperatures. Saturday is missing.



Question 2

Here is a row of numbers
1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10 11 12 13 14 15 16 17 18

Find three numbers that add up to 30. Draw a ring round them.

Question 3

Write in the missing number

□ ÷ 5 = 22

Alarm over low standards

Junior schools may test pupils at nine

By DAVID CHARTER, EDUCATION CORRESPONDENT

GILLIAN SHEPARD is asking her curriculum advisers to consider introducing formal tests for nine-year-olds in an effort to counter widespread alarm about primary school standards.

The Education and Employment Secretary called for research on testing at nine after the first national results at 11, published last week, showed worryingly low achievement levels in English and mathematics. Concern deepened yesterday when Chris Woodhead, the Chief Inspector of Schools, singled out primary teachers for criticism over the way standards slip between the ages of seven and nine.

Mrs Shephard has also asked officials from the School Curriculum and Assessment Authority to devise ways of assessing five-year-olds so their progress can be constantly checked against national targets. Ministers believe regular test results will bring pressure from parents for

standards to be raised if schools are under-performing. The latest results for 11-year-olds showed 48 per cent reached the expected standard in English and 44 per cent in mathematics. For seven-year-olds, the figures were 75.5 per cent and 78 per cent, while at 14 they were 55 per cent and 57 per cent.

Mr Woodhead, writing in *The Times*, said: "The quality of teaching in the junior age range must be improved significantly in perhaps half of all primary schools."

The authority's own report on last year's tests highlighted concerns that the four-year gap between tests at 7 and 11 should be bridged by some form of assessment. The report said: "Some teachers have suggested that, to track children's progress across the four years more effectively, there could perhaps be more formal assessment halfway through the key stage."

The report added that any

move to introduce tests at nine "would need to be balanced against the implications that such assessment would have for teachers' workload, and the costs of providing the necessary materials".

Mrs Shephard has ruled out making any new tests compulsory since the national curriculum framework is fixed until 2000. It would be the 1997-98 school year before tests at nine could be piloted and only after that would they be offered to schools as an option.

Teachers unions are sceptical of the value of more tests. Nigel de Gruchy, general secretary of the National Association of Schoolmasters and Union of Women Teachers, said: "We cannot have testing all the time because there would be no time for teaching. If it is going to mean extra work we may have to consider re-introducing our boycott of testing."

Simon Jenkins, page 15



Tovarich crew members with their cars in Newcastle. "In the Ukraine we will be the envy of our friends"

Away the Ladas for stranded crew

FIVE Ukrainian sailors stranded on Tyneside for ten months are setting off for home in a convoy of three battered old Ladas.

They are the remaining crew members from the tall ship *Tovarich*, marooned since last April, when safety experts declared that it would cost £2 million to make her seaworthy. Since then, they

have been relying on the generosity of local people for food and clothing.

The original crew of 34 dwindled away to just Captain Oleg Vandenko and five shipmates, who have spent two months repairing the Ladas, which they bought for £1,200. On Friday, they will drive to Harwich for the Hamburg ferry. In the best

tradition, Captain Vandenko will stay with his ship. Valera Karpenkov, 25, the third mate, said: "Everyone has been great but I haven't seen my wife Natalie and my home in Lvov for almost a year."

In England there are many jokes about Ladas, but in the Ukraine we will be the envy of our friends. His crewmate Vasily Feisenko, 23, was married just six months before he set sail for Britain. He said: "We spent what was left of our savings and money from home on the cars. They look good as new."

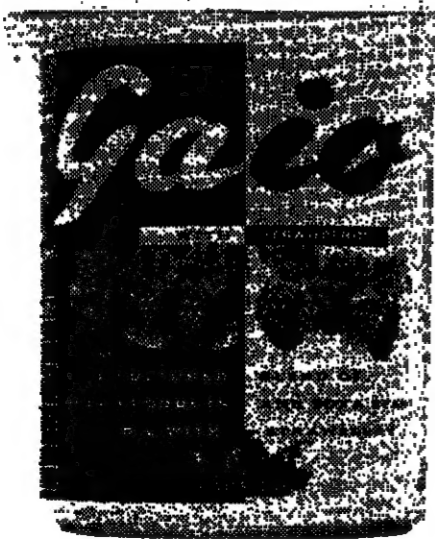
One local garage, Central Motors in North Shields, even spent three days working on one car free of charge to make sure it is ready.

The crew's wages were still paid direct to their families

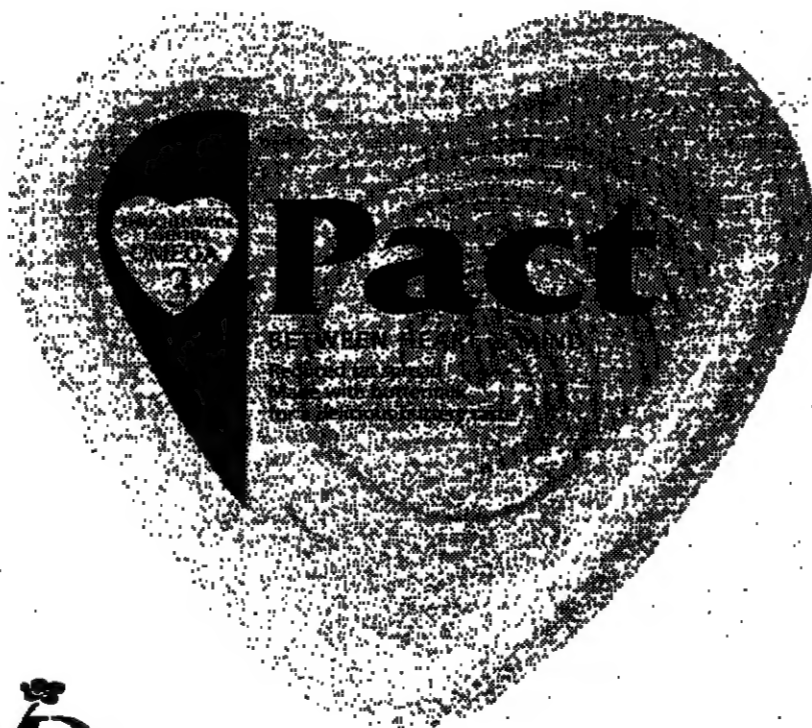
back in the Ukraine, but a lack of foreign reserves saw their overseas allowances run dry. They were looked after by the Tovarich Support Group, which includes youngsters from inner-city estates in North Tyneside and Newcastle. The bond was formed during the 1993 Tall Ships Race when some of the youngsters enjoyed a sail training course on the ship.

The *Tovarich* was brought back to Tyneside in April by the Coalition Against Crime, which bought L200 sail training places for underprivileged youngsters. The group was originally told the *Tovarich* could be repaired for £500,000. She is now at North Shields, as the support group try to raise funds to sail her. The crew will be back in six months.

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0443 02744

9 900314 240301

Footballer jailed for killing man with a kick

By JOANNA BALE

A SOCCER player was jailed for five years yesterday for killing a man by kicking his head like a football.

James Kelly, 22, of first division club Wolverhampton Wanderers, was seen in "volley" Peter Dunphy in an early-morning brawl outside a hotel after being refused entry to a party. Liverpool Crown Court was told that Mr Dunphy, 26, died immediately.

Mr Justice Kay told Kelly, who admitted manslaughter: "It may well be that a sentence of imprisonment will ruin your chosen career, but you will be able to rebuild your life in the future. The deceased is denied that opportunity."

Kelly's 23-year-old brother, John, and Kevin Atkinson were jailed for nine months after admitting assault. The assault happened when Kelly, of Willenhall, West Midlands, and his friends were refused entry to the Bradford Hotel in Liverpool in September 1994. A night porter who heard a distinctive crack, told police: "I don't think he could have kicked him any harder." Afterwards, Kelly shouted: "You wanted it and you got it. You should have let us in." The former England and Wolves manager, Graham Taylor, described Kelly as "extremely popular, trustworthy and with an excellent reputation".

Pollution inspectors prepare for dirty fight

By NICK NUTTALL

INSPECTORS joining the new Environment Agency will be offered clip-on gas, ultrasonic stun-guns and courses in unarmed combat to deal with scrapmetal merchants with big dogs.

The agency, which comes into force in the spring, merges the National Rivers Authority, Her Majesty's Inspectorate of Pollution and regional waste authorities. A priority is to crack down on flytippers and companies using small rubbish or scrapmetal merchants to dump toxic waste.

A national force of inspectors will be better placed to pick up the illegal shipping of hazardous wastes from one region to another. Dr Peter Hinchcliffe, head of waste regulation, said inspectors were likely to face violent situations as "they turned up the heat on some of the small operators who have ignored proper waste disposal procedures".

Ed Gallagher, chief executive of the agency, said: "Those in local authority waste regulation units have recently been on a course in unarmed combat. This is so they can deal with the illegal end of the waste disposal market safely. By this I mean the scrapmetal dealer with two rottweilers."

Rattle to step down as musical director

By DALYA ALBERGE
ARTS CORRESPONDENT

SIR Simon Rattle is to step down as musical director of the City of Birmingham Symphony Orchestra, it was announced last night.

By 1998, when Rattle's contract expires, he will have been with them for 18 years: he joined the CBSO in 1980 as principal conductor and became music director in 1991. After his contract ends, he will work with them as a guest conductor. Edward Smith, chief executive of the CBSO, said Sir Simon had not been appointed to another orchestra.

Rattle, 41, who is widely regarded as the most brilliant conductor of his generation, said last night: "The position of music director requires 150 per cent energy and commitment, and there are only so many years that any person can keep up the sheer intensity necessary. I will look forward to giving the orchestra I love, and respect so much, of my best as a guest from 1998 onwards. I will continue to work with the CBSO more than any other orchestra - our musical bond is bound to endure."

He added: "My years with the CBSO have been the most



Rattle will continue to work with CBSO

satisfying and fulfilling that any musician could imagine. With the consistent wholehearted support of the city, we have travelled a long road and have remained not only a good team but good friends."

Rattle has been acclaimed as a guest conductor with orchestras round the world. Sir Michael Checkland, the CBSO's chairman, said: "All of us cannot thank Sir Simon enough for his outstanding and challenging artistic leadership over so many years. It has been his total dedication to the orchestra which has transformed the CBSO into the very fine organisation it is today."

Joan Collins for pride after novel

Seaman saved by sister who begged Blich's pardon



Blue light wins favour in a flash

Hundreds of asthma deaths 'are due to wrong treatment'

By JEREMY LAURANCE, HEALTH CORRESPONDENT

MORE than 1,000 people are dying from asthma in Britain each year because doctors prescribe the wrong drugs, experts said yesterday. Many chronic sufferers are given treatments that relieve their wheezing but do not tackle the underlying condition.

Under-treatment can result in permanent damage to the lungs and increases the risk of a severe attack leading to hospitalisation or death. A global campaign has now been launched to improve treatment of the condition, which affects 150 million people worldwide.

It has risen by more than 50 per cent in most affluent countries since 1970 but the reasons for the rise are not understood. Asthma is the only preventable disease for which deaths in Europe and the America have risen over the past 20 years.

The Global Initiative for Asthma, started by the World Health Organisation and the

US National Heart Lung and Blood Institute, has produced treatment guidelines for doctors and patients. Dr Romain Pauwels, chairman of the Initiative and Professor of Respiratory Diseases at the University of Ghent, Belgium, said yesterday: "Between 60 and 70 per cent of deaths from asthma could be prevented with modern treatment. We are confident 100,000 lives a year could be saved worldwide by our programme. Modern treatment can reverse the disease and allow most of those affected to lead a normal life."

Advice has changed since the mid-1980s, when patients were told to use bronchodilators to ease their wheezing and switch to anti-inflammatory steroid inhalers only when their disease became too severe to control in this way.

Now experts say patients using a bronchodilator three times a week should switch immediately to inhaled ste-

roids to prevent damage to their lungs.

Professor Albert Sheffer of Harvard Medical School said: "Earlier intervention with inhaled anti-inflammatory drugs gives the best hope for a future free of asthma. Nobody should die, lose a night's sleep or a day's work."

Dr Martyn Partridge, a consultant chest physician in London, said that British studies showed a quarter of asthma patients were being prescribed bronchodilators at a level which suggested they should have been switched to inhaled steroids.

"Giving bronchodilators is like painting over rust or sticking a plaster on a boil. It does not treat the underlying condition," he said.

The global initiative is funded by 15 drug companies. Panel members said that, although inhaled steroids are more expensive, they save costs by reducing hospital admissions and days lost.

Donor puts 'fatally ill' baby on road to recovery

By TIM JONES

A BABY who has spent most of her seven months in a sterile plastic bubble has returned from hospital in Newcastle to Ireland after recovering from a usually fatal condition. Soon after Carol O'Gorman was born, Breda, her mother, told her three other children that their new sister would die.

Carol was diagnosed as suffering from Severe Combined Immunodeficiency, a rare genetic flaw in which the body's main defence against infection is not properly formed.

Dr Terry Flood, a specialist in paediatric immunology at Newcastle General Hospital, knew her only hope lay in a bone marrow transplant. No donors could be found in her family but, against the odds, an unrelated donor was found and her condition improved, although she remains ill.



Breda O'Gorman with Carol, who spent months in a sterile plastic bubble

Arthritis clue may rewrite treatment

By NIGEL HAWKES, SCIENCE EDITOR

A NEW approach to treating rheumatoid arthritis could come from studies at Birmingham University that have clarified the causes of the disease.

Professor Paul Bacon, of the department of rheumatology, said that the discovery had revolutionised the way scientists thought about the disease. Far from being the product of an overactive immune system, he said, it is caused by an immune system that is too sluggish in some respects. This means that drugs that aim to suppress the immune system may be the wrong approach to treating the disease.

Rheumatoid arthritis often starts as a flu-like illness. The body's immune system produces killer T-cells to destroy the infection and, once they have done so, they should disappear in a process known as apoptosis. In arthritis, the Birmingham work has shown, these cells linger in the joints, causing damage that leads to chronic disease and pain.

Consultant says he was framed over man's death

By RICHARD DUCE

A CONSULTANT told the High Court yesterday that a former Health Secretary, a senior civil servant and health chiefs orchestrated a plot in which he was "framed and set up" when the death of a patient exposed a shortage of neurosurgical beds.

Anthony Percy, accused Virginia Bottomley of conspiring with William Wells, chairman of South Thames Regional Health Authority, to deflect criticism from the fact that a dying patient had to be flown 200 miles from Queen Mary's Hospital, Sidcup, to a bed in Leeds. Mr Percy, 55, said the plot involved Stephen Collinson, chief executive of Queen Mary's Hospital, and a senior civil servant.

Mr Percy was called "Dr Dolittle" by the *Daily Mirror* after he was criticised in a report for not attending Malcolm Murray, who was taken to Queen Mary's Hospital with serious head injuries. Mr Percy is claiming damages from Mirror Group Newspapers which, he claims, suggested in an article on March 29 and two further reports that he was guilty of gross dereliction of duty, bore some responsibility for Mr Murray's death and should be suspended. The publisher denies libel.

Mr Percy said Mr Collinson had sent him a letter saying it was politically inevitable that scapegoats would be required.

George Carman, QC, for MGN, said: "You realise you are making extremely serious allegations?" Mr Percy: "A very serious allegation has been made against me. The facts were manipulated."

Mr Carman: "Are you suggesting that the inquiries were conducted dishonestly?" Mr Percy: "If manipulation is a word I would prefer to use."

Earlier, Mr Percy, of Bickley, Kent, said: "I feel like a criminal. I feel that my reputation and my whole life is in question and I feel very strongly about it. I shall live with those headlines for the rest of my life."

He said that, in an "anonymous" meeting with Mr Collinson three weeks after Mr Murray died, he was put under pressure to say he could have done more to save Mr Murray.

Mr Percy said he had been interviewed two weeks earlier by an inquiry panel at Queen Mary's Hospital during a "friendly and informal" meeting when no criticism was levelled against him. In a report by Mr Wells for the South Thames authority, Mr Percy was criticised for failing to attend the hospital but Mr Percy said he was never interviewed by the chairman or any other members of the inquiry team.

The trial continues.

Schoolgirl 'bride' flies home denying she is pregnant

By BILL FROST AND ANDREW FINKEL IN ISTANBUL

SARAH COOK, the 13-year-old girl who illegally married a Turkish waiter she met on a family holiday, was back in Britain last night having denied reports that she was pregnant.

The teenager arrived at Heathrow yesterday afternoon on a Turkish Airlines jet, accompanied by her mother, Jackie, 39, who, according to Miss Cook, had convinced to return home. Dressed in a peasant headscarf and long red coat, Miss Cook was last off the flight. Turkey had paid a regretful farewell to the girl from Bournemouth, Essex, who had earned the title of the "nation's daughter-in-law".

Also on a weekly news magazine of Islamic bent, believed that the pressure for her to return had been caused less out of concern for her welfare and more out of anger that she had rejected her Western roots. The girl's mother came to symbolise, in parts of the Turkish press, the wrath of a scorned Western culture. "Born between two mothers," said the daily *Hurriyet* with Miss Cook depicted between her mother (in stretch pants) and mother-in-law (with her head covered, in Islamic fashion, like the girl).

Yesterday at Heathrow, police covered Miss Cook's head with a blanket as they escorted her to a car, and Mrs Cook and her daughter were driven away to avoid the media. Before leaving Istanbul,



Sarah Cook felt she had no option but to return

but the girl told journalists that, contrary to stories in the Turkish press, she was not pregnant. Her father-in-law had told a news agency that she was expecting his son's child.

When asked about Mustafa Kozdagac, the 18-year-old she had "married" in his home village of Kahramanmaraş and who is now in jail on a charge of statutory rape, Miss Cook said: "They are taking my husband away. We will wait for each other and I can return to him as soon as I can - if I get my passport back."

The teenager, who had been ordered back to Britain by a High Court judge on January 26, said she had not wanted to return. However, having been made a Ward of Court, she felt she had no alternative. "If I did not go, they might have sent my parents to prison."

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Doctor with a book 75% pay for job in Brit.

Judge held responsible for damage to boat

Eat out for a fiver

THE TIMES
Eat out for £5 VOUCHER

Doctor with dog took 75% pay cut for job in Britain

By PAUL WILKINSON

AN AMERICAN doctor whose new British employers paid for his rottweiler and eight-year-old pick-up truck to be brought from Missouri said yesterday they were all he had left after a messy divorce settlement.

As part of the relocation package for Dr Craig Baldwin, who has remarried, the Hartlepool General Hospital in Cleveland agreed to pay £2,300 for quarantine and travel for Fritz and shipping the vehicle.

Dr Baldwin, 52, who was recruited as a £52,000-a-year consultant anaesthetist, said he had decided to make a fresh start here with his new wife Tricia, 51. "I have spent 12 years going back and forth to court. I was left nearly bankrupt. I liquidated my assets and handed them over to her [his ex-wife] so she would leave me alone."

"I agreed to come over to work in England as long as my dog and truck came and that was accepted as relocation expense. I hope people do not think I am costing the trust extortionate amounts of money. I took a 70 per cent pay cut to come here."

"There were many reasons I wanted to come to England, but one thing that would have stopped me was if Fritz could not come. I don't think it was unreasonable of the trust to pay the bill. I didn't make the quarantine laws. My truck is a 1988 GMC pick-up with 75,000 miles on the clock. The resale value would be virtually nil. I need a vehicle and could not afford to buy a new one in England where prices are double those in the States."

Brian Hanson, chairman of the Hartlepool and Hartlepool NHS Trust, said: "Nationally, there is a problem getting qualified staff and some trusts have had to hire consultants at double the going rate, paying £100,000. We have avoided doing that and believe this one-off payment was money well spent."



Craig Baldwin was prepared to work here only if Fritz and the vehicle came too

Peer suffered from rare condition

Duke's death caused by drug poisoning

By DOMINIC KENNEDY

THE mystery surrounding the death of the Duke of Northumberland, one of Britain's most flamboyant peers, was cleared up yesterday when an inquest was told that he died of amphetamine poisoning.

An earlier hearing was adjourned after a post-mortem examination had failed to find a natural cause for the 17-stone duke's collapse.

The 42-year-old bachelor was taking a daily average of 20 of the tablets, which can be used as a recreational drug, but had been prescribed for a rare medical condition.

The 11th duke, a godson of the Queen, had almost four times as much amphetamine in his system when he died as most people would have who were using the drug therapeutically. "He didn't intend the outcome," said Dr John Burton, the West London Coroner. "Therefore I will put it down as an accidental death."

The duke, Richard Henry



The duke was found dead in his bedroom

Alan Walter Percy, was found dead by his valet, Brinnley Moralee, at Syon House in west London. The duke's body was by his bed and he appeared to have died while getting up. His tablets were arranged on a cabinet.

Margery Meakes, personal assistant to the duke, said: "He would fall asleep often during the day because he couldn't sleep at night."

The coroner read a report

that said the duke's medical condition began to deteriorate in his early 20s. He lost weight and developed depression. He was prescribed amphetamine and then became very heavy.

David O'Connell, the duke's doctor since 1990, diagnosed a rare disorder of the glands, hypogonadotropic hypogonadism, which causes sleep problems and excess weight. The duke was given Dexedrine, which contains amphetamine, to keep him awake during the day. To reverse that, he was prescribed sleeping pills for the night. By August 1995, he was taking a daily average of 20 Dexedrine pills and up to 20 Parlietins.

The coroner said: "There is absolutely no question of these being used as drugs of addiction in this case."

Dr Richard Shepherd, a pathologist at Guy's Hospital, said death was due to amphetamine poisoning causing an irregular heart beat which led to heart failure.

Judge held responsible for damage to boat

DAMAGE to a fishing vessel was the legal responsibility of a judge who had ordered it to be seized, the Admiralty Court ruled yesterday.

Judge Richard Holloway signed a document in April 1992 ordering bailiffs to immobilise the *Sincerity S* at Fisherman's Wharf in Maryport, Cumbria, in an action over an alleged £734 debt. However, two engineers who carried out the job, by removing fuel pipes, also dislodged a rubber pipe allowing sea water to leak into the vessel. It had to be pumped out by the fire brigade.

Dennis Tunstall, the boat's owner, took the judge and the engineers Joseph Pire and Co to the Admiralty Court in London. Yesterday Mr Justice Clarke said the damage was caused by negligence and that a district judge was responsible for the acts or defaults of a bailiff.

Mr Tunstall was awarded £9,000 and most of the costs, estimated at a total of £30,000. However, the district judge was spared from having to find his share of the money — Mr Justice Clarke ordered that the engineers should indemnify him.

The damages were to cover the drop in the vessel's value. Mr Tunstall had asked for £28,500.

Appeal over racial slip dismissed as fanciful

By MICHAEL HOGSNELL

A JUDGE who used the phrase "nigger in the woodpile" during a case in which a man of mixed race sought damages from the police has been cleared of racial bias by the Court of Appeal.

The comment was made in 1994 by Judge Bernstein during summing up at Liverpool County Court in the case of Valentine Reid, who was seeking £50,000 from Merseyside Police for alleged malicious prosecution.

Judge Bernstein, 64, was referring to white police officers when he made the remark. After losing his action, Mr Reid appealed on the basis that, even though the judge immediately apologised, "nigger" should have stopped the case upon being slipped the offending phrase.

Peter Herbert, of the Society of Black Lawyers, said in the appeal court that the judge had displayed racial bias even if it was unintentional.

Lord Justice Waite, sitting with Lords Justices Beldam and Morritt, said that while it was right to highlight the risk of prejudice in racially sensitive times, it was "fanciful" to suggest that any jury would have been influenced by the remark. Mr Reid's appeal was dismissed.

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THE TIMES



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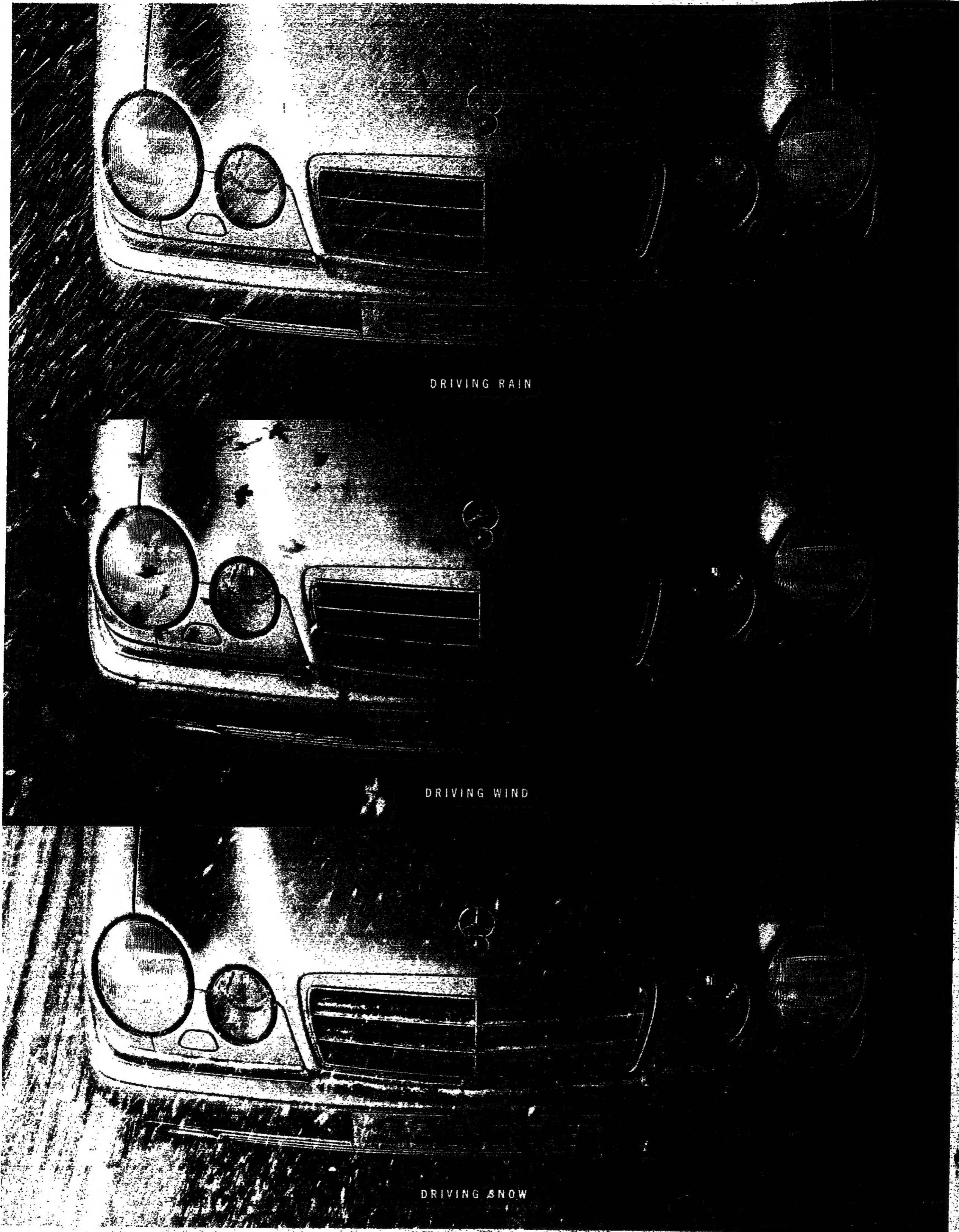
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Why a healthy
language has
to sometimes
break the rules

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A year ago a woman had her throat slashed on a country road. Today her killer is still at large

Motiveless murder leaves twin sister struggling to cope

By PAUL WILKINSON

THE past few days have been hard for Elsie Wilson, a slight, silver-haired Yorkshire farmer's wife. She has been gathering her courage to face the anniversary this weekend of the savage and motiveless murder of her twin sister.

A year ago on Friday Margaret Wilson was attacked as she walked home from her daughter's house to the family farm on the edge of the Yorkshire Wolds village of Burton Fleming. Two men working in a field saw a motorist stop his car and jog several hundred yards back to slash her throat and leave her dying on the roadside with a gaping wound.

The attack stunned the close-knit rural community, where murder is viewed as the stuff of TV and the distant big cities. Edwin Wilson, Marg-



Margaret Wilson: her killer left few clues

aret's husband, and their son Alan were working only hundreds of yards away and were among the first on the scene. They know that the motiveless nature of the killing means finding the murderer is well nigh impossible.

A year on, despite wide-

spread publicity, police admit they face an uphill struggle. The 6ft attacker, aged about 30 with collar-length dark hair, vanished, leaving almost no clues. Even the unusual murder weapon, a stubby blunted knife, designed for shoe-making, has failed to provide a conclusive lead.

Elsie Wilson lives less than 400 yards from the murder scene. "I see it every day, but you just have to get on with life, you push thinking about it out of your head," she said. She has lived all her 67 years within five miles of the family home and cannot countenance moving.

Mrs Wilson and Alan, her nephew, agreed to a police request to break their year-long silence and speak to the media in an attempt to find new clues. As Mrs Wilson offered journalists traditional hospitality — home-made fruit



Margaret, left, and Elsie Wilson at their joint wedding in 1948 to two local brothers, and as Girl Guides. The twins had always been close

cake and tea — she said: "People have asked me if, as a twin, I had felt some premonition of Margaret's death, but no, I knew nothing. I had been in the hairdressers when my husband told me. I could not believe it. I do miss her."

The sisters were close. They grew up together on the Wolds, both joining the Brownies and Guides and falling in love with two local brothers. They had a joint wedding in 1948 and honeymooned together in the Lake District. They were preg-

nant at the same time twice. They would often joke about choosing the same greetings cards for relatives.

Alan Wilson still finds it difficult to accept the death. "I come in expecting her to be there, or think of something I must tell her. She was simply the best mother in the world."

He and his aunt are convinced someone is sheltering the killer. "A wife or girlfriend must be aware that something was wrong that day," he said. "They should come forward now. If he is as unhinged as

we think he must be, he could do it again and they could be the next victim."

Detectives have traced 3,000 white Montego estates similar to the killer's and taken 5,000 statements. The offer of a £15,000 reward by Humberside Police and Crimestoppers has had no effect.

Detective Superintendent Tony Corrigan, leading the investigation, said the killing remained an enigma, but added: "I am convinced there are still people holding information which might help us."



No end in sight to the grief: Alan and Elsie Wilson

REITH LECTURE

Why a healthy language has to sometimes break the rules

By TUNKU VARADARAJAN

IS OUR language sick? Jean Aitchison asked last night, with a clear flavour of rhetoric. Professor Aitchison, who holds the Rupert Murdoch chair of Language and Communication at Oxford University, sought to answer her own question in the first of five Reith Lectures — entitled *The Language Web* — on Radio 4.

The professor, a linguist, believes that English, far from being sick, is in rude good health. Last night's lecture, playing on her theme of a language-web, focused on a "web of worries" — trivial anxieties about the state of our language.

Professor Aitchison asserted that English changes constantly, and that such transformation "is a fact of life". Even Chaucer, in the 14th century, noted that "in forme of speche is chaunge", and she believes that the same is true today. But such change, she argued, must not be confused with decay — an argument the professor has made at greater length in her elegant book *Language Change: Progress or Decay?*, first published in 1991.

British English, she said, is not changing for the worse. On the contrary, the Reith lecturer may have come tantalisingly close to arguing that English is changing for the better. She did not say so explicitly, of course, but she did refer with approval to the modern-day loosening of some of the language's "artificial rules".

These pseudo-rules she dates, in many cases, to the 18th century. "Around 1700, the seemingly fixed grammar of Latin aroused great admiration, at a time when English itself was in a fairly fluid state," she said.

Professor Aitchison even cited a letter to the Lord

Treasurer from Jonathan Swift, urging the formation of an academy to regulate language usage — comparable, one assumes, to the modern *Académie Française*.

Swift believed, as did Robert Lowth, an 18th-century Bishop of London, that Latin usages would fertilise a "correct English". Professor Aitchison gave listeners a few examples of these "artificially imposed rules". The apparent prohibition of "different to" she described as "a misguided attempt to make English behave more like Latin". She has often mounted the same defence in favour of split infinitives.

Furthermore, she asserted that it is only due to "an old and illogical belief that logic should govern language" that English has a ban on the double negative.

"This is odd," Professor Aitchison declared, "because in most languages of the world, the more negatives, the stronger the negation". The central message of last night's lecture was that we need to understand language, not try to control it. When new forms flood in and wipe away older usages, the process should not be likened to "disintegration".

"Sweeping up old oddments is good housekeeping," Professor Aitchison pointed out, in the accessible manner that is her trademark.

In her second Reith Lecture next Tuesday, the professor will lecture on the origin of language in the human species. "Crucial to its development," she said intriguingly last night, "were two loosely woven webs, a web of deceit and a web of friendship."

□ Professor Aitchison's Reith Lectures will be broadcast for the next four Tuesdays at 8.30pm on BBC Radio 4.

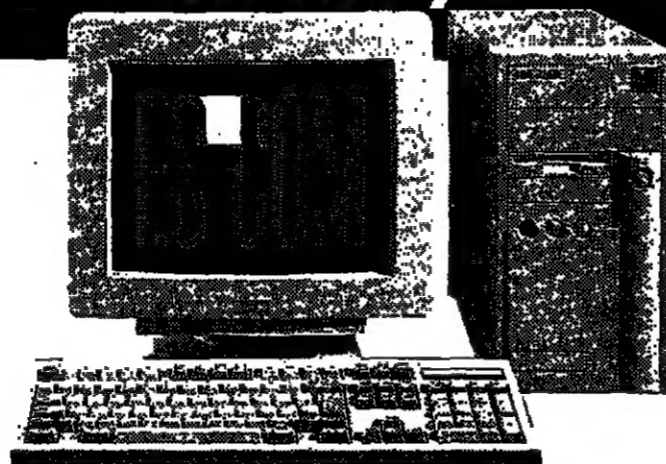


Aitchison: defended flexible English

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Mackay: field day for the lawyers

Tories warn of collision course for Scots parliament

By Philip Webster
POLITICAL EDITOR

A TAX-RAISING Scottish parliament could soon be in a permanent confrontation with Westminster, the Lord Chancellor says today as the political parties prepare for a fresh battle on constitutional reform.

Tony Blair, delivering the John Smith memorial lecture in London tonight, will outline Labour's plans for Scottish and Welsh devolution, reform of the House of Lords,

freedom of information and a Bill of Rights. He will also call for a "stakeholder democracy", arguing that the Tory defence of the status quo will fuel public dissatisfaction with politics.

At the same time Brian Mawhinney, the Tory party chairman, will launch a pre-emptive strike against Mr Blair's proposals for a Scottish parliament, claiming that they are a direct threat to the survival of the United Kingdom because they would put the parliament on a collision course with

Westminster. In a foretaste of the campaign the Tories intend to run against the "tartan tax", Mr Mawhinney will question why Labour MPs sitting for Scottish seats but paid in London should be exempt from a tax they wish to impose on their constituents.

Writing in *The Times* today, the Lord Chancellor, Lord Mackay of Clashfern, makes a rare foray into the constitutional debate, saying that giving Scotland tax-raising powers could lead to a "field day for the lawyers". He questions why tax-

raising powers should be given if politicians are arguing that they may not be needed. To increase taxes uniquely in Scotland would be bad for Scotland. But in the unlikely event of the powers being used to lower taxes, profound constitutional as well as economic issues would arise. How long would English MPs continue to vote more money to Scotland than to their own constituents, only to see it used to fund tax cuts north of the border.

He adds: "A tax-raising Scottish

parliament would, soon be in permanent confrontation with Westminster. Break-up of the United Kingdom would then be but a step away."

The Labour leader, however, will use his speech to go on the offensive, trying, his aides said, to change constitutional reform from a chattering classes issue into a radical populist vote-winner. He will challenge the Government to say whether it thinks that the constitution works well. He will say that "power to the people is not a

slogan but a necessity if we are to reconnect politics with the people". Mr Mawhinney will make plain that the constitution is the next front in the anti-Labour offensive. He will argue that representative government, the rule of law, and personal liberty — among the Union's historic achievements — are threatened by Labour's plans. He will repeat claims that a Scottish parliament would have a "tartan price tag" of 5p on income tax.

Lord Mackay, page 18

Give the poor a sporting chance, peers demand

By Alice Thomson, Political Reporter

PEERS from all sides of the House queued up yesterday to denounce the Government over its plans for television sports coverage.

They were speaking on the first amendment of the Broadcasting Bill, which would deny subscription channels exclusive rights to broadcast eight major sporting events. Most emphasised that it was vital to keep the main sports events available on mainstream television because only 15 per cent of viewers had satellite or cable television.

Several peers aimed their criticism at Rupert Murdoch, chairman and chief executive of The News Corporation, parent company of News International, BSkyB satellite TV service is 40 per cent owned by News International, which owns *The Times*.

Lord Howell, a former Labour Sports Minister, was one of the sponsors of the amendment. He told the Lords that they were fighting for the "ethic and spirit" of sport as well as the economics and financing of major events.

"I have a profound belief in the social purpose of sport. In essence the social purpose of sport is best expressed through its spirit, commonly known as sportsmanship. These precepts are being increasingly undermined by the total domination within sport of financial considerations above all others."

Lord Howell said that the Bill ignored up to 40 million people who could not get or could not afford Sky television. "They ignore the elderly and the infirm, who now apparently can be sacrificed in the interests of one man — Mr Rupert Murdoch," he said.

He warned sporting companies not to become too enamoured by lucrative deals with BSkyB. "Anybody who wants to get into bed with Mr Murdoch never gets out of bed the same man," he said.

Lord Peyton of Yeovil, a

former Tory minister, admitted there were detailed problems with the amendment but said that peers should support it as "a nudge to the Government to produce something better to cope with some really difficult problems".

He warned the Government: "There are many millions of the public who would find themselves very unhappy at being denied access to what are major national events simply because they could not afford the gadgetry necessary."

Lord Peyton described Mr Murdoch as "a man who owes this country no allegiance and who doesn't seem to be overwhelmed by admiration for its institutions or its way of doing things". He added: "I doubt whether there is any other

country in the world which would have allowed a man who was a non-national to acquire quite the degree of immense power and influence which Mr Murdoch has, by his very great ability, achieved by himself."

But he was immediately criticised by the crossbencher Lord Wyatt of Westford, who accused Lord Peyton of being "xenophobic" and disagreed with the amendment. "It is a concerted attack on one man because he has been more successful than others. The one thing people in this country don't like is people who have been successful," he said.

Lord Wyatt said that the BBC had never bothered to show the whole of the Ryder Cup when it had been the broadcast, but BSkyB could. He said that the elderly and the young could watch sport for free in pubs that had satellite television. "The BBC forces the elderly and infirm to buy a TV licence," he said.

He said that the horse racing industry had been badly hit by the National Lottery. "Racing really deserves to get as much money back in as it can. I don't think it's impossible or wrong for anything racing owns to be sold to the highest bidder."

The former Commons Speaker Lord Weatherill, leader of the crossbenches, supported the amendment. "In recent days I have lost count of the number of people who have said to me: 'What are you going to do about this so-called crown jewels of sport Bill?'"

The former Home Secretary Viscount Whitelaw was one of only four out of 16 peers who spoke for the Government. He appealed to them to give the Government more time over the issue and leave the final decision to the Commons. "It is important to try and get it right. I don't think that would be by this measure at this time," he said.



Howell: Bill ignores 40 million viewers



Weatherill: protecting 'crown jewels' of sport



WELFARE LATEST: TOP TORY WITH ONE NATION DELUSIONS TO BE RELEASED INTO THE COMMUNITY.

Clarke is struggling to reconcile pressures from conflicting camps

Kenneth Clarke yesterday tried to satisfy two contrasting audiences — voters worried about the welfare state and Tory MPs and activists keen for cuts in public spending. He was only partly successful, and so may satisfy neither.

Politics is, of course, about reconciling conflicting aims. In the short-term, an adroit Chancellor can fulfil the desire of people both for better public services and cuts in taxation. But, in the long-term, the pressures cannot so easily be reconciled.

In his London School of Economics lecture yesterday, Mr Clarke made a convincing case for gradualism. He hardly needed to cite the riots in Paris before Christmas against social security changes as a warning against sudden reforms. Calls by the unthinking Right for cuts of £10 billion or more at a stroke are nonsense. Of course, there is always scope to eliminate waste but this can never be more than a partial contributor to cuts in overall spending. Long-standing commitments

cannot be torn up suddenly. There is no alternative to the piecemeal approach of Peter Lilley in limiting future commitments. Over time, these can produce sizeable savings.

Mr Clarke argued that as a result of these and other changes the real growth of public spending has been limited to 1 per cent a year, compared with 1½ per cent a year during the 1980s. Despite the recession — and big increases in spending before the 1992 election (though he did not mention these) — the peak level of expenditure of 43½ per cent of national income in the 1990s was two points less than a decade earlier and nearly four points less than in the mid-1970s. Moreover, spending is forecast to fall to 40 per cent within two years. And, Mr Clarke diplomatically added, he and the Prime Minister "have both said we will then aspire to reduce it further". As long as the economy continues to grow and spending is held down in real terms, there are

no limits as to how much the share can be reduced — though, unlike John Major, he did not refer to a 35 per cent figure.

The absence of such a specific long-term target, or even aspiration, will not satisfy the Tory Right, but it is the limit of prudence as long as the Government claims, in Mr Clarke's words, to be developing "a strong welfare state". He made a powerful case for free health and education services and a safety net for old age paid for out of general taxation as an important reassurance for people at a time of rapid economic change, complementing more flexible markets by reducing fear of change and opposition to it.

But there are long-term tensions between these commitments and overall spending restraint. Much can be done through structural changes to improve efficiency. But these savings are not sufficient to finance

technological improvements and to meet the ever-rising demand for better services. Current plans for spending to remain more or less constant in real terms imply a continuing squeeze in the real pay of public sector workers and cuts in many popular programmes. These cannot be sustained indefinitely. This is not an argument for a big rise in total spending, but rather a recognition that it can only be held down, let alone cut in real terms, if more provision is financed by the private sector.

There is no reason why the public sector should remain the sole, or even predominant, supplier of some services which people clearly want. This is already occurring in pensions, as Mr Lilley will point out today, but it needs to happen elsewhere. Otherwise, despite Mr Clarke's best efforts, repeated squeezes on spending will merely result in more public complaints about inadequate services, with little reduction in the burden of expenditure or taxes.

PETER RIDDELL

MPs back curb on explicit teenage magazines

By James Landale
POLITICAL REPORTER

A TORY backbench move aimed at curbing the sale to young children of sexually explicit teenage girls' magazines cleared its first Commons hurdle yesterday.

The Periodicals (Protection of Children) Bill would require magazines to carry coverage warnings about articles that may be unsuitable for readers below a certain age. Peter Luff, Tory MP for Worcester, introduced the Bill after reading magazines bought by his 10-year-old daughter.

He said yesterday: "These magazines undermine the value and importance of sex. I want to help parents and schools by making it easier to learn what is inside. I want editors and publishers to decide what their lowest target age is for each magazine, and say so on the front cover."

Most ten-minute rule Bills are used to publicise an issue and rarely have any chance of becoming law. But Mr Luff's Bill, given its first reading without a vote yesterday, has widespread support.

Some magazines recently banned a magazine for children aged 10 to 17 because it offered explicit advice performing oral sex. Mr Luff told MPs that the letters' pages in magazines such as *Sugar*, *Mix*, *It's Bliss*, *16* and *More!* often degenerated into "squalid titillation", "salaciousness" and "coercive". He acknowledged that the magazines "sometimes gave sensible advice" but said that the language used was of a kind more usually seen on the walls of public lavatories.

Simon Hughes (Lib Dem, Southwark and Bermondsey) said that the Commons had to proceed carefully. "We must not end up with an age marking that makes these magazines 'more appealing' rather than less appealing."

Tory sources said that if the Bill did not succeed the Government might consider introducing a code of practice.

Leading article, page 19

IN PARLIAMENT

YESTERDAY in the Commons: questions to defence ministers and the Prime Minister and a debate on British Gas followed by debates on future of GP fundholders; Collective Redundancies and Transfer of Undertakings (Protection of Employment) (Amendment); Regulations proposed closure of Farnham, Wiltshire Home, Sutton Coldfield, in the Lords: the Broadcasting Bill, committee stage; health and safety in fishing.

TODAY in the Commons: backbench debates followed by Foreign Office statement on Labour's decision on no proliferation and the "renewed threat of chemical terrorism"; and backbench debate on pensions, welfare, crime and jobs, in the Lords: debate on employment in financial services; industrial relations and Community Representation Bill, second reading.

Commons to vote on pay in July

By Philip Webster

MPs will face a key vote in July on whether to accept an independent review that is almost certain to recommend a big increase in their pay before the general election.

The Government has asked the Senior Salaries Review Body to conduct a comprehensive investigation into the pay, allowances and pensions of

MPs and ministers, calling for recommendations if possible by the end of June. The body is expected to recommend a new mechanism for determining the annual updating of MPs' pay without the need for a parliamentary decision.

MPs want to avoid what has become an annual embarrassment over their pay. The senior Labour backbencher Alf Morris, a sponsor of the

Commons motion that has led to the inquiry, welcomed the decision to hold an independent review. He said: "Nobody I know has asked for a doubling of MPs' pay. What the motion did and what unites us all is to make it clear that MPs' pay should no longer be decided by MPs themselves — an unwholesome, invidious and wrong system. We are now very glad

it has gone for independent adjudication."

Yesterday's move follows talks between the party leadership over the past few days. Both wanted to defuse the issue after protests from poverty groups. However, the June target date is regarded as highly important. Labour want the issue well out of the way before a general election that it expects to win.

Harman has little impact

By Peter Riddell

THE Harriet Harman row has hardly dented Labour's support, according to the latest ICM poll for *The Guardian*.

Half the public, including a half of Labour supporters, think that Ms Harman was right to send her son to a selective grammar school, despite Labour's opposition to selective education. This may

explain why the affair has had so little impact on Labour's standing.

The poll, undertaken between February 2 and 4, shows that Labour support has only declined by one point since early January to 47 per cent, according to ICM's adjustment of the figures. The Labour lead has narrowed from 22 to 16 points because support for the Tories has

risen from 26 to 31 per cent over the month. This is in line with other evidence suggesting that the Government's rating is beginning to pick up.

The Tories' gain was largely at the expense of the Liberal Democrats, whose support slipped from 23 to 19 per cent. These changes reflect a comparison with the immediate aftermath of Emma Nicholson's defection.

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Indian wo state join to outlaw

Chalker tells King to allow democr

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Indian women and state join forces to outlaw alcohol

FROM CHRISTOPHER THOMAS IN DELHI

THE north Indian state of Haryana has announced that all rural liquor stores must close permanently by April 1. The decision marks another attempt by politicians to control the nation's appetite for alcohol.

The ban is a victory for women, who rose in anger because so many of their husbands were spending their meagre wages on alcohol at small government-run shops. Not that the ban will work, of course, as in other states that have introduced prohibition, it will simply create a bootlegging industry, and drive up prices.

Andhra Pradesh, the big southern state where women launched an unexpected campaign against the shops, has been experimenting with prohibition for a year. Women shaved the heads of drunken men after they passed out and they refused to cook or wash the clothes of persistently drunken husbands. They even went on sex strikes.

The result is that politicians moved into the illegal distilleries racket, enriching themselves while paying lip-service to the evils of drink. Gujarat, the home state of Mahatma Gandhi in western India, has

had prohibition for years, in deference to the anti-alcohol sentiments of the father of the nation, but the ban is a farce. Drink is readily available, albeit at high prices, from bootleggers. Illicit stills are common in the countryside.

Every political party in Haryana, a farming state, has been forced to support prohibition because the anti-drink movement, backed by Hindu religious organisations, has gained such momentum. As in Andhra Pradesh, women attacked liquor shops and delivery vehicles to stop sales of drink in their villages.

Members of the Bharatiya Janata Party, a Hindu nationalist political group, plan to unite the homes of Dalits (Untouchables) and low-caste people in Haryana in search of alcohol bottles that will be smashed in a public demonstration. Similar gimmicks were employed by Hindu organisations when Andhra Pradesh officially went dry.

Tipplers in Andhra Pradesh complain that black-market whiskey is triple the price of pre-prohibition days. Even the cost of the local toddy, *arrack*, has soared. The price of imported whiskey would seem huge in rural India. A stan-

dard bottle costs about 900 rupees (£16.60), which is more than most people earn in a month.

The distilling of *arrack* has become a cottage industry in rural Andhra Pradesh, with entire families engaged in the trade. Local toddy tappers, who extract the principal ingredient for *arrack* from palm trees, are in greater demand now that whiskey is so expensive on the black market. *Arrack* is often laced with chemicals to give it extra kick, sometimes with fatal results.

Fines for possession of alcohol are high. Houses can be raided without a warrant, government officials can be dismissed if caught drinking and repeat offenders risk jail. For the most part, people simply bribe the police.

One well-off man caught with three bottles of premium whiskey said that he had had to pay more than £2,000 to get the case dropped.

Plundered treasure returns to Greece

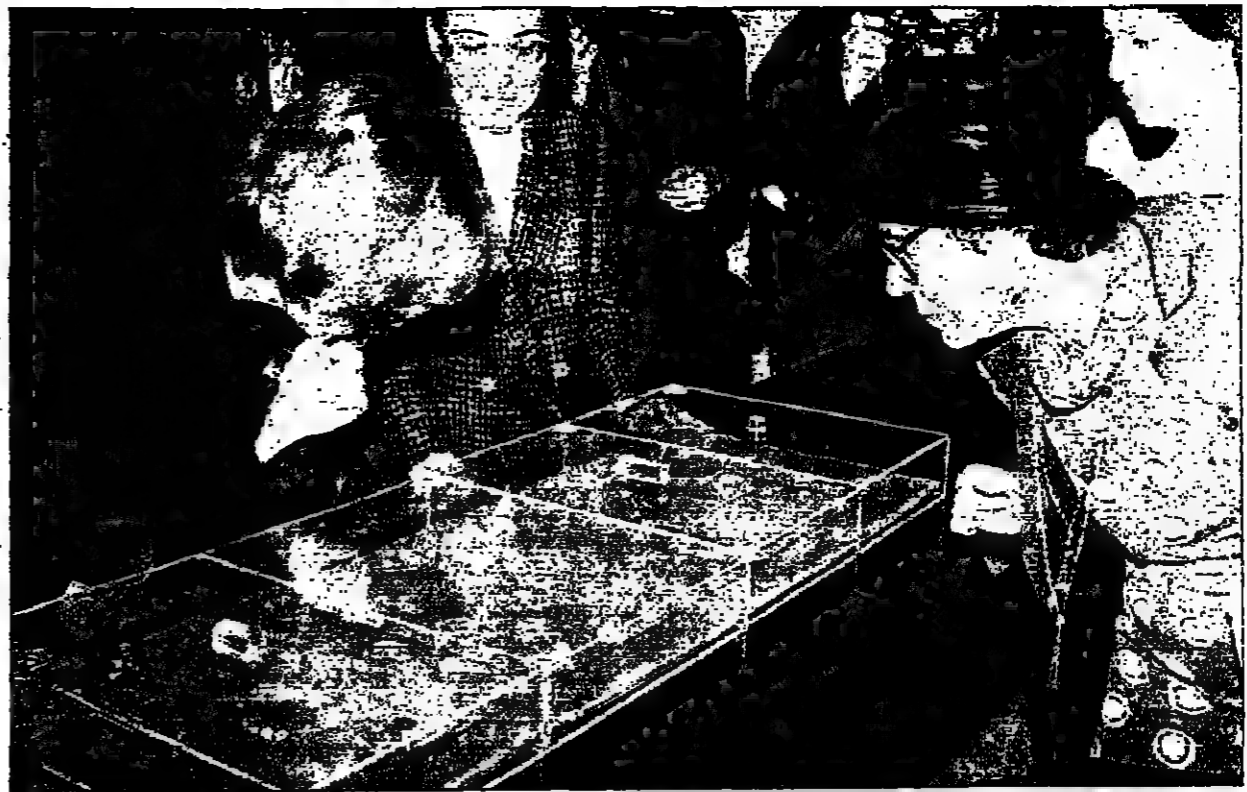
FROM JOHN CARR IN ATHENS

A SET of ancient Greek jewellery, possibly Europe's oldest, has been returned to Greece two years after the Government in Athens proved that an American art gallery was exhibiting them illegally.

The 312 pieces, mainly gold-en rings, earrings, beads and bracelets, had been looted from an ancient grave site in southern Greece 19 years ago, officials of the Greek Culture Ministry said. After a bit of detective work, involving the perusal of a catalogue of New York's Michael Ward Gallery, Katerina Dimakopoulou, a senior ministry archaeologist, flew to America in March, 1993 to verify her suspicions.

After eight months of legal fighting the Greek Government proved to an American court that the jewellery had been looted. The set was re-housed in the National Archaeological Museum of Athens this week.

Mrs Dimakopoulou cited a Unesco convention of 1970



The returned jewellery, including a signet ring, right, goes on display in Greece

which requires a claimant to prove that allegedly stolen antiquities came from a specific area. In this case, it was a group of 15th century BC graves at Aidonia in the Peloponnese, the site of the Mycenaean Greek civilisation which fought the Trojan War.

The jewellery has been dated to 1,000 years before Peri-

cles and the flourishing of classical Greek civilisation. When archaeologists first dug into the Aidonia graves in 1975, they found evidence of recent looting.

From then on, Greek embassies and consulates around the world had been told to keep their eyes open for the stolen antiquities.

Nicoletta Valakou, an archaeologist, said. The Greek Government has said that it cannot afford adequate protection for the thousands of sites containing ancient relics around the country, many of which are unguarded.

"Antiquity smuggling is a scourge for us," Mrs Valakou said.

Chalker tells king to allow democracy

FROM RAY KENNEDY IN JOHANNESBURG

A HINT by Britain to the tiny African kingdom of Swaziland that the time has arrived to come to terms with democracy or face the economic consequences was spurned yesterday when police arrested a leading trade union official.

Baroness Chalker of Wallasey, the Minister of Overseas Development, urged King Mswati III and his Government ministers not to resist

slowly introducing changes. Her visit on Monday to Mbabane, the capital, came after an eight-day general strike last month that crippled the country. Swaziland, landlocked between South Africa and Mozambique, is ruled by an absolute monarchy.

After his talks with Lady Chalker, King Mswati announced that he would revive the 'suspended' constitution and elections on the type of political system the people wanted. But last night, as the king's announcements were rejected by the country's largest underground political party, the People's United Democratic Movement, police in Mbabane arrested Jabulani Ntshale, assistant general secretary of the Swaziland Federation of Trade Unions on perjury and forgery charges dating back to 1984.

The federation has called for a second general strike from February 20, said a union official in Mbabane said he feared that the country was heading for bloodshed and violence.



Mswati: monarch in troubled kingdom

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British Gas

Forbes's fortune leaves campaign rivals trailing

FROM MARTIN FLETCHER IN WASHINGTON

AS Louisiana Republicans prepared to cast the first votes of America's 1996 presidential election last night, new figures revealed the breathtaking sums Steve Forbes is spending on his maverick bid for the White House.

In 1995 the publishing heir spent \$18 million (£11.5 million). Robert Dole \$20 million and Phil Gramm \$19 million — but then Mr Forbes did not enter the race until September. In the last three months of 1995, Mr Forbes spent \$14 million compared with Mr Dole's \$8.4 million, Mr Gramm's \$5.4 million, Lamar Alexander's \$3.5 million and Patrick Buchanan's \$3.2 million.

Since the beginning of the

year, Mr Forbes's spending has actually accelerated and his total outlay must now exceed \$20 million. That is a staggering amount considering actual voting is only just beginning, but one that has propelled him into second place in most polls.

Moreover, these figures from the Federal Election Commission understate the huge advantages Mr Forbes enjoys as a result of using a personal fortune of roughly \$440 million to finance his campaign.

Firstly, he has been able to draw out his Republican rivals' messages. Nearly \$10 million of his \$14 million expenditure in the last quarter was on advertising, while a lot

of his rivals' was on fundraising. He has spent four times more on commercials in Iowa, scene of next week's caucuses, than any other candidate. The average voter in New Hampshire, which holds the first primaries on February 20, now sees Forbes advertisements 34 times a week.

Secondly, Mr Forbes's spending has forced his rivals to dig deeper into their war chests to remain competitive. This virtually ensures the swift departure of all candidates who finish outside the top three in Iowa and New Hampshire.

However, Mr Forbes is not bound by any spending limits as he is not receiving taxpayer funds, and he promises to remain in the race right up to the Republican nominating convention in August. He says he will "invest and spend whatever it takes to get my message of hope, growth and opportunity across to the voters" and could surpass the record of \$60 million which Ross Perot spent on his independent candidacy in 1992.

Mr Forbes's rivals accuse him of trying to "buy" the Republican nomination, but voters seem unconcerned. Many consider his wealth makes him incorruptible and beyond the reach of lobbyists.

Mr Forbes also argues that all his spending would be futile if he did not have a powerful message. In 1980, John Connally, the former Texas Governor, spent \$12 million chasing the Republican nomination but won not a single primary. Mr Gramm, the Texas senator, has spent more than \$20 million but remains stuck in single figures in the polls.

All have been willing to cross party lines in order to reach compromises, but their replacements will almost certainly be more liberal or more conservative. The same is true in the House.

The Democrats have little hope of recapturing the Senate, which the Republicans control with 53 seats to 47. The Republicans must defend 19 of the 33 contested seats, but eight of the 13 retiring senators are Democrats and the Republicans look certain to capture three of their seats. The Democrats have more chance of retaking the House, where all 435 seats are in play and they need a net gain of 20.

absolutism are heralded as heroic defenders of truth, justice and the American way.

Mary McGarry, the liberal Washington Post columnist, wrote that "under Newt Gingrich and his commando freshmen, the usually raucous, but often jolly, House has taken on the charms of downtown Sarajevo — a war zone".

The exodus, if anything, will accelerate the polarisation of Congress. Those leaving the Senate include Sann Nunn of Georgia, Bill Bradley of New Jersey and Jim Exon of Nebraska, all Democrats; and Mark Hatfield of Oregon, Nancy Kassebaum of Kansas, and Alton Simpson of Wyoming, who are Republicans.

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Congress exodus turns into a flood

BY MARTIN FLETCHER

THE US Congress will suffer one of the biggest exoduses in its history this November as moderates of both parties are driven away by the increasing rancour on Capitol Hill.

On Monday, Virginia's L.F. Payne became the 30th member of the House of Representatives to announce that he would not be seeking re-election. Thirteen senators will be retiring, breaking the record of 11 set 100 years ago.

Congressmen have to spend more time fundraising in return for fewer perks. However, it was Congress's capture by a new breed of hardline Republican ideologues in 1994 that seems to have been the last straw. Most leavers are Democrats who have been in opposition, but moderates of both parties say they are appalled at how basic civility has given way to incoherence and compromise has become a dirty word.

The retiring members "share a common level of frustration over the absence of political accord and the increase in personal hostilities", William Cohen, one of the Republican senators who is leaving, said. "Those who seek compromise and consensus are depicted with scorn as a 'mushy middle', that is, weak and unprincipled. By contrast, those who plant their feet in the concrete of ideological



Elizabeth Taylor and Larry Fortensky, who met at a drug rehabilitation clinic. The building worker had an illustrious list of predecessors, including, from left, the film star Michael Wilding, Mike Todd who died in a plane crash, Eddie Fisher, Richard Burton who was married twice to the actress, and Senator John Warner

Elizabeth Taylor ends 'forever' marriage

FROM GILES WHITTELL IN LOS ANGELES

IF HER past is any guide, she will be marrying again soon.

After eight weddings to seven men in 41 years, Elizabeth Taylor has filed for divorce from the man of whom she announced in 1991: "This is it, for ever." Ms Taylor met Larry Fortensky, a building worker 20 years her junior, in a California drug rehabilitation clinic in 1988.

When they married five years ago at a "private" ceremony at Michael Jackson's Neverland Ranch, helicopters laden with television cameras jostled for airspace and paparazzi hid in the bushes.

They separated last August and the divorce papers, filed at the California Superior Court in Los Angeles on Monday, cited "irreconcilable differences". The actress's



Ms Taylor and Conrad Hilton, her first husband

lawyer, Neil Papiano, said she was still fond of Mr Fortensky and that the divorce would be swift, amicable and private. He declined to confirm whether there was a pre-nuptial agreement, but

such contracts have smoothed her previous divorces.

Ms Taylor's first marriage in 1950 was to Conrad Hilton, the hotel chain heir, when she was 18. After less than a year she left him for Michael

Wilding, who was more than twice her age. In 1957, she married Mike Todd, who died when his plane crashed a year later. She was married once to the Hollywood lothario Eddie Fisher, once to Senator John Warner, and twice to Richard Burton.

Of all Ms Taylor's matrimonial adventures, none was stranger than the one just ended. All the couple appeared to have in common was their choice of clinic — a Betty Ford centre near Palm Springs — and a dependence on painkillers.

Within months of their wedding, there were rumours of discord in Ms Taylor's Bel Air mansion, where she was struggling with arthritis that led to two hip replacement operations and Mr Fortensky was said to prefer beer and television to his new wife's social round.

Clinton to give evidence on video

FROM TOM RHODES IN WASHINGTON

THE White House yesterday sought to play down a subpoena for President Clinton to testify at a fraud trial in Arkansas as Republicans seized on the latest political embarrassment as further evidence of misconduct by the First Family.

Mr Clinton had been subpoenaed by a federal judge as a witness in the Little Rock trial of Susan McDougal and her husband, James, the Clintons' business partners in the failed Whitewater land venture, and their co-defendant and Arkansas Governor, Jim Guy Tucker.

Mrs McDougal, who claims the President's testimony is vital to her trial next month, has been accused of receiving a \$300,000 (£190,000) loan that David Hale, a former municipal judge, says, Mr Clinton and others pressured him to make to her in 1986.

Mr Hale, the Government's star witness, has accused Mrs McDougal, her husband and Mr Clinton of taking part in a scheme to defraud the Small Business Administration of the loan.

The former judge, who last year pleaded guilty to an unrelated fraud, later made a plea bargain to testify in the Whitewater investigation.

Mr Clinton has denied the allegations and agreed to testify next month. Lawyers for Mrs McDougal still hope the President will appear in person, but it seems certain he can satisfy the subpoena by offering either a videotaped deposition or live testimony by satellite from Washington.

The White House has been quick to argue that Mr Clinton is being called only as a character witness and precedent has shown other Presidents have given testimony in criminal cases. Nevertheless, testimony by a sitting President is rare. Ronald Reagan did so by videotape at the Iran-Contra trial, but the President had left office by then.

Gerald Ford gave similar evidence at a trial of a woman who was convicted of trying to shoot him, while Jimmy Carter gave a videotaped deposition in a 1978 trial relating to the fugitive financier, Robert Vesco.

The prospect of a personal appearance would place an enormous spotlight on Whitewater and related questions and could subject Mr Clinton to cross-examination by Kenneth Starr, the chief prosecutor.

Samper fights for political survival

FROM DAVID ADAMS IN BOGOTÁ

FACING allegations that he won the presidency of Colombia with \$6 million (£4 million) in secret donations from drug lords, President Samper is fighting for political survival against increasing odds.

As Señor Samper's Government teeters near collapse, commentators clamouring for the President's resignation are asking whether he can survive. His electoral campaign manager and treasurer, once

trusted friends, are under arrest and telling investigators about alleged financial misdeeds by the Liberal Party.

Moreover, Washington is threatening to cut financial aid to his Government and warning him that it will seek the extradition of jailed drug lords if they are not given harsh sentences.

A lawyer by training, Señor Samper insists he is innocent. While few believe such a large sum of money could have been received by his campaign without his knowledge, the

President seems confident that there is no firm evidence against him. "There does not seem to be anything that really nails him," one diplomat said. "There is no cheque with his name on it and no video of him with suitcases of money."

But Señor Samper may still be forced to resign. In 1994, his campaign spent \$12 million, three times the legal limit. Besides about \$6 million in drug money, his party also allegedly received through fraud \$2 million from a public fund for election campaigns.

Despite the lack of proof linking Señor Samper to drug money, his role in electoral fraud and oversteering may be easier to establish. In that case, experts say, he may be offered a more dignified exit — resigning over minor misconduct and thus avoiding any criminal charges that might land him in jail.

If Señor Samper opts to fight all the charges against him, his biggest obstacle would be the United States.

Leading article, page 19

\$15m art disappears at airport

New York: Three works of art worth an estimated \$15 million (£9.8 million) disappeared from New York's John F. Kennedy airport after an apparent gaffe by security guards (Quentin Letts writes).

The pictures, which include two pieces by Picasso, should have been placed under special guard after they were held at the airport due to bureaucratic problems. Instead, the outside contractors entrusted with their care allegedly treated them like a routine package. The three missing pieces

are a 1927 Picasso painting, *Woman Seated With Skull in Left Hand*, a 1956 Picasso drawing called *Portrait of a Woman Dedicated to Jacqueline* and an 1897 painting, *Paris Street* by Pissarro.

They arrived in New York last Thursday in the hand luggage of Avelino González, a Mexican businessman and co-owner of the art. He was intending to take them to New York auction houses for evaluation.

Señor González was told that he lacked the proper

paperwork and a "house broker" to take them through customs. In exchange for a receipt, he surrendered them to officials for safeguarding in a bonded, holding area. Dynair, a company which transports goods to the holding area, allegedly violated its own rules by failing to give the paintings special protection.

When Señor González returned to the airport the following morning to claim the pictures, they could not be found. The FBI has been called in to investigate.



If you don't listen to your doctor

Germany's wooing of uneasy Russia unsettles nerves in Central Europe

HELMUT KOHL, the German Chancellor, is preparing to meet President Yeltsin next week amid fears that Germany is slipping back into its historical role of explainer of, and occasional apologist for, a restless Russia.

The suspicions were fuelled by the tone of Herr Kohl's address to the annual Wehrkunde defence conference in Munich at the weekend. He talked of the need to understand the psychological vulnerability of the Russians and hinted that the West should tread lightly with its plans to enrol Central European states in Nato. Coming from the West's chief

Roger Boyes reports from Bonn on suspicions that Germany is slipping back into its role of occasional apologist for the Russians

bridge-builder with Russia, the comments had an unsettling effect on the Central Europeans and confused Western participants.

An interviewer this week for the Polish government daily *Rzeczpospolita* mirrored her country's anxious view of the changing relationship in a question to Klaus Kinkel, the German Foreign Minister. "After a frosty period because

of the Chechnya war, German-Russian relations seem to have become very close and friendly again — although all reformers have been excluded from the Moscow Government and despite the Russian Army trampling over human rights in Dagestan. Despite all this, you supported Russian admission to the Council of Europe. Is Russia being judged by

different standards?" The minister dodged the question; he emphasised that Germany had a parallel *Ostpolitik* to enlarge Nato and the European Union and simultaneously to strike up a special relationship with Russia.

There is no doubt that all groups within Russia are opposed to Nato enlargement eastwards. Yet Nato retains this as one of its defining missions and Germany, of all the Western allies, has the most to gain from moving Nato's border from the River Neisse to the Bug.

There is no way of squaring the circle: one of the priorities has to give way. In the negotiations be-

fore the Kohl-Yeltsin meeting, due to begin on February 18, the Russians have come up with different, mainly warmed-up, ideas. Nato, or individual Nato countries, could strike bilateral security agreements with Central European states; that the Russians say, would be preferable to fully fledged membership. Or the Organisation for Security and Co-operation in Europe — to which Western countries, the Central Europeans, the Ukrainians and Russians belong — could be given more muscle. None of this convinces Central Europe, nor has it persuaded the German leadership.

But the emphasis now is on understanding Russian fears rather than on swiftly accommodating the Central Europeans. Javier Solana, the Nato Secretary-General, notably omitted any dates for Nato enlargement in Munich last weekend, yet emphasised the need for quick progress on developing a strategic partnership with Russia. As President Yeltsin became more erratic, the political friendship with Germany came under strain. But senior German diplomats, having studied carefully the recent utterances of his Communist rival, Genadi Zyuganov, seem to have come to the conclu-

sion that a Yeltsin victory in the presidential election would be marginally better for German-Russian relations. It is, however, a finely balanced calculation and talk of Nato enlargement is being muffled, at least until after the Russian election in June.

The critical question is how much Mr Yeltsin can be offered by Germany, on behalf of the West. Germany and Nato could never offer Russia a veto on alliance affairs. But a certain vagueness about Nato enlargement seems to be the order of the day.

Letters, page 19

Rifkind's boast of EU leadership mocked by Brittan

By MICHAEL BINYON, DIPLOMATIC EDITOR

MALCOLM Rifkind, the Foreign Secretary, claimed yesterday that Britain would lead the way in Europe in strengthening relations with America and promoting transatlantic free trade. His claim was hotly disputed by Sir Leon Brittan, the European Commissioner responsible for European Union relations with America.

Mr Rifkind also said Britain was the "enterprise centre of Europe", and claimed that the British Government had forced the pace within the European Union on liberalising trade with America.

Without Britain's efforts — "aided by Germany, Sir Leon Brittan and others" — the EU would not have won agreement at the Madrid summit in December to look at how remaining trade barriers could be scrapped.

His speech comes as Brussels has begun a counter-offensive against what it sees as British attempts to delay or derail European economic and monetary union (EMU). Mr Rifkind is seen as taking British policy further down the road to Euro-scepticism.

Sir Leon, who on Monday publicly derided any attempt to delay the proposed start of EMU in 1999, today mocks the Euro-sceptics, saying that a substantial advance in transatlantic relations has been achieved by the EU "with no help from the anti-European tub-thumpers in Westminster". Writing in *The Times*, he welcomes Mr Rifkind's speech, but notes that Britain alone could not have achieved this major step alone.

He says Britain is pushing at an open door in urging Europe to seek closer relations with America. The aims are

attainable "provided that the Foreign Secretary's positive approach is not distorted by those wishing to misrepresent it as giving encouragement to Euro-sceptics who wish to detach Britain from Europe."

Mr Rifkind, addressing the Transatlantic Policy Network, said: "We must apply the transatlantic partnership to furthering our prosperity, just as we do for our security. Britain will be leading the way in this effort. As Europe's foremost proponent of free trade, Britain will be a champion of greater economic liberalisation across the Atlantic."

His speech dwelt on the need for a new international framework to underpin the close economic relations between Europe and America.

His remarks will, in themselves, raise no hackles in Brussels, where the Commission is committed to deepening its ties and dialogue with Washington. However, Britain's attempt to claim credit for the new initiative will irritate both Sir Leon and the Spanish, who made a revitalised EU relationship with America a centrepiece of their presidency.

Interviewed yesterday on his speech, Mr Rifkind told the BBC it was a plea to Europe to turn its attention outwards. "There is a process of global liberalisation taking place, and our relations with North America are only part of that process which also ultimately has to involve the Far East and other parts of the world."

Chirac may also be invited to address a meeting of the Houses of Parliament.

There is little disguising Britain's political interest in such a visit. In the run-up to the IGC, which will review the Maastricht treaty, the Government is anxious not to be isolated, and is making strenuous effort to forge alliances with European Union partners on issues where it shares their views.

An undeclared aim of policy towards France is to wean Paris from the federalist embrace of Germany and prevent a solid Franco-German front on all negotiating issues.

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Two of Cézanne's great-grandsons are in town for the exhibition, which opens tomorrow. Neither M Cézanne nor his cousin, Pierre Gobert, 61, inherited any of the paintings but confess to sharing the artist's temperament. "Like my great-grandfather I am

stubborn," M Cézanne, who works as an art expert, said. "I explode just like Cézanne exploded. I bottle up annoying remarks that people have made until suddenly a little thing sets me off. Cézanne was like that. That is something of Cézanne that we have kept. We are all opinionated."

M Gobert has not inherited any of his great-grandfather's talent but sees some similarities in his work as an aeronautical engineer. "I have inherited in my work his perfectionism. Just like him, I do not like things to be badly done — even if it is just



Pierre Gobert, left, and Philippe Cézanne, discuss "Portrait of Madame Cézanne with loosened hair", by their great-grandfather, at the Tate

Great-grandsons give their impressions of Cézanne

By LEILA LINTON

PHILIPPE Cézanne was feted in London this week as he arrived for the opening of an exhibition of his great-grandfather's work. Selling out fast, with thousands of people jamming the Tate's switchboard, the exhibition is expected to be more popular than the Picasso display in London in 1994.

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M Gobert has not inherited any of his great-grandfather's talent but sees some similarities in his work as an aeronautical engineer. "I have inherited in my work his perfectionism. Just like him, I do not like things to be badly done — even if it is just

changing the taps in the bathroom."

Both men share Cézanne's introversion. "My great-grandfather went into painting like some go into religion," M Cézanne said. "He decided from the outset to be, alone, solitary like a monk. With all the family is shy."

M Cézanne says he knew he would never become a painter. At school, his art teachers would reproach him. "They would always say to me, 'If only your great-grandfather could see you! And that was terrible.' He now owns a gallery near the Louvre. The

name of Cézanne, he admits, has helped him in his career, although it bothered him at first. "I wanted to be known for myself, but it was difficult. There is now only one artist among the descendants of Cézanne, and she prefers not to be connected with the name of the great painter, to ensure her own artistic freedom."

The cousins' grandparents sold all Cézanne's paintings and they had to wait for the exhibition to see some of them again. M Gobert was visiting a gallery in Paris when his mother, when he saw a watercolour, which looked like

mine. She reminded him that it used to hang on the wall at home when he was a child.

Those anxious to find out about Cézanne, the man from his descendants will be disappointed. M Cézanne said: "He was a very secretive man. It seemed normal that we had connections with Renoir's family and that they would come to the house. It was just family history."

"One can only know him through his paintings and this exhibition will allow the public to really know the artist and to understand him through his work."

Grain of scientific truth in tale of poisoned Tsarina

FROM THOMAS DE WAAL IN MOSCOW

A MURDER mystery 400 years old may be solved by archaeologists who have disinterred the body of Anastasia, the queen of Ivan the Terrible, one of Russia's most bloodthirsty tsars.

"We cannot rule out poisoning," was the verdict yesterday of a chemical expert, Natalya Voronova, who had examined Anastasia's body in her tomb in Archangel Cathedral, in the Kremlin. Ms Voronova said she had found large doses of mercury salts in the queen's hair. Hair preserves poisons longer than any other part of

the body and indicates how much the body has absorbed.

Tradition has it that the young Anastasia was poisoned by jealous rivals at court, who resented her influence. Born Anastasia Zakharina, she was Ivan IV's first wife and a love match who bore him six children. She came from a wealthy family, ancestors of the Romanov dynasty, but was considered by many courtiers to be an upstart not worthy of a tsar.

The Byzantine intrigues of the affair are known to millions of Russians through Sergei Eisenstein's film *Ivan The Terrible*. Political murder was a not uncommon way of settling scores

in 16th-century Moscow and Ivan himself later stabbed and killed his favourite son in an argument.

It was the early death in 1561 of his beloved Anastasia, who was still in her twenties, that pushed Ivan, who had a reformist reputation in the early years of his reign, into the reign of terror that earned him his sobriquet "the Terrible" (in Russian, "the Cruel"). He married six more times and was eventually excommunicated by the Orthodox Church.

Anastasia's sarcophagus was opened during a dig in the Kremlin cathedral, the burying place of all the early tsars. The Kremlin is being

gradually restored, allowing archaeologists unique opportunities to excavate the tombs.

Mercury salts could be procured from physicians in 16th-century Moscow, and although a court plotter may have slipped them into the queen's wine there may also be a more innocent explanation. Ms Voronova said. The salts were used in the distant past as a medicine for a range of diseases, including leprosy and syphilis, she said. Traces of mercury were also found in the remains of Ivan himself when they were examined in the 1960s, leading many historians to believe that he died of syphilis.



Ivan the Terrible: may have died of syphilis

Bankers protest over Moscow killings

Moscow: An alliance of Russian businessmen and bankers announced yesterday it was drafting a protest letter to President Yeltsin after the murder of another Moscow banker, the latest victim in an epidemic of contract killings (Thomas de Waal writes).

Aleksei Butenko, 26, the first deputy chairman of Creditinvest Bank, was found on Monday in a car park with his throat cut and multiple knife wounds. He is the 33rd lead-

ing banker to be killed in Russia in the past five years.

Aleksandr Orlov, executive director of the Round Table Of Russian Business, said that his organisation and several others were sending a letter calling on the authorities to take urgent action to defend businessmen from organised crime. "We don't see any of our proposals being put into action," he said. "We keep on meeting to bury someone. It is terrible."



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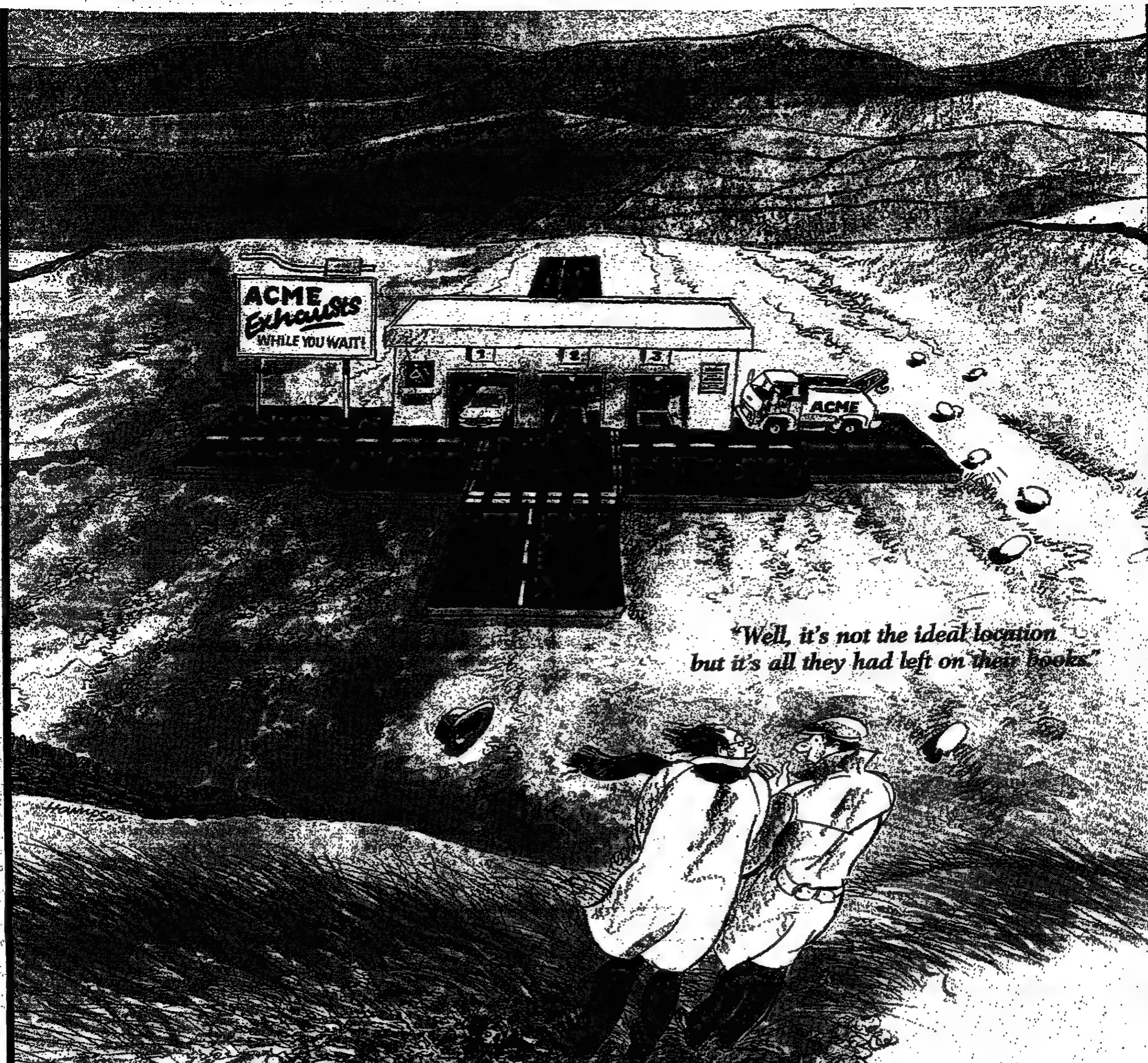
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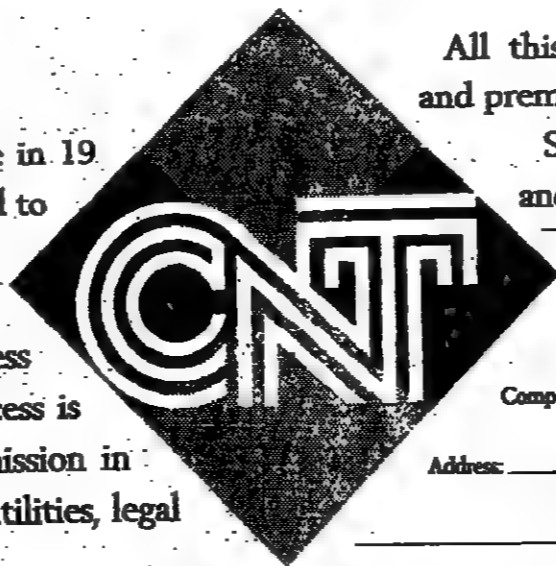
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Cool kids know what they want



Above: CASSIA CLARKE, aged two, in a multi-coloured patchwork dress and matching hat, £42.95, Florianne, Kids Universe, Selfridges (0171-629 1234). Far right: Cassia wears a red and white check dress, £13, Boots Children's Wear, selected branches (01159 485 681)



Above: DELILAH MAJSTOROVIC, aged six, in a cardigan, £15, leggings, £7, M&S (0171-935 4422); sunflower pumps, £10.99, Ravel (0171-631 0224); puffy jacket, £26.99, Next (0116-264 9424); hat, £89, Ninivah Khomo, 5 Beauchamp Place, SW3

CASSIA

Above: her mother, Jaqueline Clarke, says: "Cassia enjoyed dressing up and thought it was great fun. The little dresses were very pretty without being too cute. When buying clothes I try to find practical, easy-to-iron pieces. I tend to buy a lot of all-in-ones rather than separates."

DELILAH

Left: her mother, Ninivah Khomo, says: "Delilah enjoyed wearing the gingham pants, patchwork knit cardigan and reversible puffy jacket. She thought they were cool. When buying for Delilah, I look for different types of looks from traditional pretty dresses to casual sporty looks."

RORY

Left: his mother, Florence Torrens, says: "Rory thought the clothes were cool and comfortable. He loves bright colours and is interested in what he wears. He has a uniform for school and looks forward to the weekends so he can wear what he likes. I buy big separates which he can grow into. He also loves wearing hats."

Three mothers photograph their children in this spring's looks

I used to be that parent who would dread the day that their sons and daughters turned 13. Teenagers wanted to do their own thing, listen to loud music — well, they called it music — and hang out with their friends to all hours. Mostly, they wanted to choose their own clothes. But I have some bad news. Today, the under-fives know exactly what they will and will not wear.

The children's-wear industry has shown phenomenal growth in the past five years. Whereas previously the search for anything more adventurous than a tartan mini-kilt or a

pair of denim dungarees would necessitate a trip to the Continent, there is now an endless choice of brands and labels to suit every occasion on every high street: from Nal-Naf and Oilly to Boots and French Connection. Selfridges on Oxford Street now has a huge department called Kids Universe, a Willy Wonka-esque wonderland which caters to a child's every desire.

The antithesis of the formal velvet dresses and mini-blazers of the traditionalists, the guiding trend for children's wear is colourful and comfortable. The consensus of the children who modelled for our

Fashion journalist of the year



IAIN R. WEBB

fashion page was their desire to look "cool". This can describe anything from a padded puffy jacket to a handkerchief worn bandanna-style. Bright paintbox colours are

popular with both parents and their children. Many of the latest styles feature snazzy patchwork fabrics and applique patches. Gingham is once again a favourite for younger babies' wear while older ages prefer the oversized street-style look of utilitarian parkas with lots of zips and pockets, and baggy combat trousers. The funky looks of today's pop and rap groups provide a template for five-year-olds who can't even spell MNS.

Mothers tend to look for easy clothes which will wash and wear.

As proud parents are forever flashing happy snaps of their offspring, *The Times* asked three mums to become photographers for the day and snap their children in some of this spring's latest looks.



Left: RORY JOBLING, aged five, in a check shirt, £49, yellow coat, £124.30, khaki trousers, £55.55, Oilly (012294 45907). Right: Rory wears a red cotton shirt, £28, blue jeans, £27, French Connection, 249 Regent St. W1 and selected branches; boot shoes, £42, Russell and Bromley, 64 Kings Road, SW6 and selected branches (0171-584 5445).



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Time to own up to being middle-class

Are the mocked and beleaguered people of suburban Middle England about to hit back? Jane Gordon defends a world of good sense and traditional values

Which is not to say that, in our way, we are not pioneers leading the way to exotic things such as the Dordogne, dishwashers, Delia Smith and dyslexia. Indeed, so much that was once foreign might still be if the middle classes hadn't discovered them — Montessori, muesli, pasta, parmesan, woks, Bulgarian cabernet sauvignon and sun-dried tomatoes.

Moreover, all of our society's most responsible, caring and considerate innovations and inventions are middle-class. Who would worry about scooping poop, the National Trust, meals on wheels, Poppy Day, bottle banks, school league tables or saving the whale if the middle classes didn't?

Almost everything that is dismissively labelled middle-class has, in its way, improved the quality of life a great deal more than anything created by or for any other sector of the population.

What have the upper classes contributed to our society — apart from blood sports and the ideal example of the dysfunctional family offered by the Windsors? What have the working classes given us — apart from pit-bull terriers, ghetto-blasters and the replacement of the once crisp Celia Johnson BBC accent with a media dominated by Estuary English?

But the time is right for a middle-class revival. People are beginning to realise the value of the things that have always preoccupied the middle classes — the traditional family, sound education, marriage, security, responsibility, good health and good manners.

In fact there are signs that as we move into the next century the middle classes might become fashionable again. Already market analysts have noted that the trend in the late Nineties will be towards what they now term "defensive spending", rather than the "profligate spending" that has dominated the past three decades.

Why, there is even a middle-class youth cult emerging — "easy listening" — where the young go to clubs that play Burt Bacharach records wearing cardigans, cravats and stay-pressed trousers.

Very soon it may be safe for those of us who are middle-class to stand up with pride without facing a barrage of abuse. With Tony Blair on our side we might, perhaps, be able to convince the world we are a moral majority and not, as it feels right now, a moral minority.



Sharing and caring: the traditional family can hold up its head again

red ribbon on her lapel the whole evening, and at some point during the evening somebody introduced him to me.

"Should I know you?" he said. "Oh no," said a man from the publishing house, "she's middle market — more Blyton than Booker."

Middle-class people, I have subsequently decided, are not expected to think, or worry or create in the way that the eccentric upper classes or the tortured working classes do. We are not supposed to have any sort of sensitivity, compassion, instinct or insight into the human condition. Rather, we are condemned as repressed, suburban, unimaginative and outmoded.

On the way home from the party I made mental notes about the way in which the rest of society views the middle classes. And gradually I began to realise that the so-called moral decline that everyone is always bemoaning could be directly linked to the unfashionability of middle-class life, values and aspirations.

Driving my Volvo down the middle of the road towards home, I was struck by how all those things that have become part of the eternal parody of our class have, in fact,

much more worth than anyone will acknowledge. Oh, I know that the Volvo is not an exciting vehicle, I know that supposedly no one ever made love in the back of one, but the marvellous thing about the car I drive is that it has a unique safety factor — its middle-class driver — that renders it beyond the interest of the casual car thief, joyrider or, for that matter, the policeman.

Then I began to make a list of the other middle-class icons that were generally ridiculed by the rest of the population but which were sound and sensible innovations — Laura Ashley, Scholl sandals, cardigans, Vivella shirts, Tescos, hostess trolleys, garden centres and *The Archers* — to identify but a few.

I quickly realised that however much other people might howl with laughter at these symbols of middle-class life, they had about them an inherent value or practicality that was missing from the rest of our harsh, modern, anti-middle-class world. Traditionally thrifty and careful with money, the middle classes are responsible for many of what might be called consumer *endurables* — things that pass the test of time.



Albie Kingston: "It is open season for others to insult you if you are educated, employed and decent"

Things that the middle classes have saved from extinction	Things that the middle classes have saved from extinction	Things that the middle classes have saved from extinction	Things that the middle classes have saved from extinction
The piano	Brown bread	Acne	The poop scoop
The horse	Montessori schools	Dyslexia	The bottle bank
The whale	Muesli	Bulimia	Neighbourhood Watch
The Labrador	Acupuncture	PMT	Garden centres
The ozone layer	Herbal teas	Natural childbirth	Marmite soldiers
BBC2	Lego	ME	Cling film
Tuscany	Mineral water	HRT	Yoghurt
Breast feeding	Skimmed milk	Braces	Radio 4
Church of England	Which?	Cholesterol	John Lewis
The National Trust	Dualit toasters	Food allergies	Unleaded petrol

A word from the front line

SIMON CRESSWELL, 35, a partner in the estate agency Finlay Brewer: "I think one of the reasons why no one ever hears the voice of the middle classes is that we were all brought up not to shout. We were raised to behave well, to be nice, to do unto others as we would be done by. We are too well-mannered to stand up and say what we might really think and mean about other sectors of society."

"There is a selfishness about the upper classes and the working classes that is missing from those of us who live in the middle."

"And our fear of offending others has made us a bit of a joke. It's been said before, but I do think that it is true that the middle classes are the real workers. We have been raised to believe that hard work, that real endeavour, will pay off. We work to targets set by our mothers and fathers. We just get on with it, quietly achieving because we work hard and believe in things like responsibility and security."

"But no one, and certainly not the Conservative Government, seems to recognise this fact. It's ironic, but maybe we need a Labour government to give us back our worth and self-respect. Perhaps Tony Blair will start to shout for the middle classes."

LIV O'HANLON, 40, mother of two, who lives in a gentrified square in south London: "I am bourgeois on both sides, and probably slightly ashamed to admit it. I live in what I suppose you might call a middle-class enclave in Lambeth."

"In the centre of our square is a garden, the upkeep of which is paid by the freeholders here. But, of course, we don't use it because the people from the high-rise blocks down the road exercise their rights in it — their rottiweilers and daisies — and we can't let our children play there because they might be savaged or contaminated by dog faeces. In fact, the chap who was the keyholder was so frightened by the responsibility — and

Ambition, hard work, responsibility — and fear. The life of the middle classes in England today



Hostess trolley: middle-class icon

the way in which the dog-walkers abused him — that he threw away the key."

"We aren't saying anything because the yobboes with their cans of lager would send their dog Tyson to rip out our throats. In a sense, I suppose you could call us the oppressed middle classes of Lambeth because, when a neighbour of mine recently applied for planning permission for a tiny extension to his house, he was refused by the council on the ground that his house was quite big enough already."

"Meanwhile, the properties owned by the housing associations are allowed to do whatever they want. When my friend questioned his refusal, he was asked why he wanted to live here and was told that Lambeth didn't want the middle classes. Even though, of course, we're probably the only residents who pay their rates."

"Most of us here are liberal middle-class, and we have got to the stage where we would shudder to say boo to a burglar for fear of not understanding his motivation."

ALBIE KINGSTON, 41, mother of two, who lives in a leafy suburb of Twickenham: "There is a stigma in society about being middle-class. In the current climate of political correctness you cannot say anything derogatory about any group of the population apart from the middle classes. We are sneered at and despised for being sensible and honourable and responsible."

We are looked down upon because we live in the suburbs and don't read *The Guardian*. And while I accept that there was a time when the middle classes were repressed emotionally, I don't think that is true now. We do show our emotions, we do pay our taxes, we do care and we do take responsibility for ourselves and our families."

"There has never been a middle-class serial killer, middle-class children are not generally on 'at-risk' registers, middle-class people don't as a rule behave in a way that offends or disturbs others. Yet it is open season for others to insult you if you are educated, employed and decent."

"We are the only people still flogging on, still saying to our children 'you have got to work hard if you want to get on', even though we have a nagging doubt that perhaps it isn't worth it."

"The middle classes are the glue that holds society together. There isn't a true democracy in the world that doesn't have a large middle class. Without the middle classes you have a dictatorship. Yet no one seems to appreciate that it is the middle classes that are funding the whole show. I think we are about to see a backlash, a middle-class uprising."

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A house devolved against itself

Lord Mackay of Clashfern on why he rejects Edinburgh rule

There is no shortage of people proposing what they believe to be perfectly-formed means for constitutional change. But those would-be reformers wrongly assume that our present arrangements are inadequate. To lose sight of the strength and ends of our constitution could lead to lasting harm.

Of course, there is no human institution which could not be made better. But it is false logic to argue that any change must therefore be an improvement. First, it is necessary to see the value of what we have. Central to what we have is the Union, developed over a long and important period of our history.

For me, as a Scot, the value of our Union is beyond price. It is the means through which all the citizens of the United Kingdom can live together in unity and diversity. Our diversity is not in doubt. The Union consists of nations of very different sizes. It accommodates two distinct systems of law, three of education, two established churches, different languages, and many distinctive traditions. Its unity is our strength. Under the Union we have built common institutions which reconcile order with liberty.

To "sleepwalk into separatism" would diminish us all — not only the Scots. I look at proposals on devolution and ask four questions: What are the constitutional ends that should be served? What would devolution offer me, as a Scot? What would be its practical consequences? And is there a better way?

First, the end must be to ensure that power is exercised as close as possible to the people. Civil society works when it has institutions with which people have an historic affinity, which are close to them and through which they know they can exercise power: a vigorous society in which citizens do more than pay their taxes and then abdicate. Despite all the criticism, I believe the House of Commons serves our people well, and that we should cherish the direct relationship between constituents and their MPs.

Devolution would interpose a new layer of politicians between the people of Scotland and their MPs at Westminster. Yet Parliament would continue to have responsibility for what is vital for the United Kingdom — its economic position, its foreign affairs and defence. It would also retain responsibility for the distribution of the proceeds of the Union Exchequer between the parts of Britain. In short, Westminster would remain the centre of power. The proposed parliament in Edinburgh would be just a sop. If you doubt this, ask the senior members of the Labour Party who propose devolution how many of them would wish to serve in Edinburgh rather than at Westminster.

Would devolution increase my sense of being a Scot? No. Would it change Scotland's distinctive legal or educational system for the better? No.

What then of the practical consequences of devolution? What the Scottish convention proposes is a separate, single-chamber parliament with tax-raising powers, able to legislate on virtually everything except what is really important for the United Kingdom. This raises three huge practical issues.

First, the West Lothian question — so-called because it was first asked by Tam Dalyell, the West Lothian MP — about the role of Scottish Members at Westminster if there were a separate Scottish parliament. If English and Welsh MPs had no say in exclusively Scottish matters, why should Scottish MPs be allowed to vote on English or Welsh matters?

Some constitutional radicals pretend to solve the West Lothian question simply by ignoring it. The Opposition, with greater intellectual honesty, recognises that the question exists, and seeks to answer it by proposing English regional assemblies. This only equates Scotland with an English region. But in any event, the proposal for regions with no powers is a plant without roots.

Are the Union and its institutions to be sacrificed for an unconsidered, unwanted patchwork of federalism? So the West Lothian question remains unanswered.

What of a Scottish parliament's tax-raising powers? Some argue that these need not be exercised. Then why propose them? To increase taxes uniquely in Scotland would, I believe, be profoundly bad for Scotland. But in the unlikely event of the powers being used to lower taxes, constitutional as well as economic issues would arise.

Government expenditure in Scotland is nearly one-third higher *per capita* than that of England. How long would English MPs continue to vote more money to Scotland than to their own constituents, only to see it used to fund tax cuts north of the border?

A tax-raising Scottish parliament would soon be in permanent confrontation with Westminster. Break-up of the United Kingdom would then be but a step away. The devolutionists suggest that disputes would be resolved by judicial or appellate committees. Better, surely, to avoid creating the disputes in the first place. From my position in the judiciary, I doubt whether this would bring government closer to the people, or make it more responsive. A field day for the lawyers would be a bad day for representative democracy.

Our living constitution may look untidy, but like the Wynds in the old parts of Scotland's towns it is homey. It is ours, and it has grown through our history. It may need some repair and renovation, but how much finer and closer to us it is than the soulless constitutional tower blocks with which the radical reformers would replace it.

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British Gas

Half a league backward

Education rankings are a pretence, not an honest way to improve teaching

Why is the Government stopping at primary school league tables? Why does it not go further? A good teacher should not be tarred by the performance of a bad school, or a bright child be lumped in with dunces. There should be national league tables of teachers, of children, even of parents. Gillian Shephard and her school inspectors, Chris Woodhead, are missing a trick. They could prove conclusively that the middle classes are top, that exams "work", that smart schools do best, that the poor are dumb and getting dumber. Why not? There might be votes in it.

I leafed through yesterday's announcement on school standards, full of the platitudes and factoids beloved of the modern audit. Mr Woodhead has found that the teaching of 11 to 14-year-olds is "disturbingly weak". Schools are subject to "unacceptably wide variations". One in five lessons is of "poor quality". Shortage of books and equipment is affecting a "disturbing proportion" of primary schools. Standards need to rise in half of all primary schools and 40 per cent of secondaries. Mr Woodhead's team have counted (but not named) 15,000 teachers who should be sacked, of whom a neat 7,500 are in secondary schools.

This is useless information. It is gibberish, bumph, make-work for bureaucrats. Such an approach to education policy reminds me of the fate of a friend whose enterprise went bankrupt with a dozen poorly paid, poorly qualified staff. His demise was attended by two brilliant accountants, a brilliant solicitor, a brilliant bank manager and a brilliant civil servant. All gathered with their fees around his grave and tutored at his failure. All were secure in their professions and would not dream of risking themselves at his coface. In Britain there are clever people aplenty to monitor, inspect, criticise those doing really hard jobs — but never to join them.

When the Inner London Education Authority was abolished in 1988, it was criticised by the Government because 20 per cent of its teachers were doing advisory work outside the classroom. As in all bureaucratised services, professionals had fled the front line. Mrs Shephard is imitating the LEA. She has officials drawing up behaviour codes for teachers, moral and spiritual codes for teachers, dress codes for teachers, assess-

ments, examinations, tests and league tables for teachers. In 1990, Her Majesty's inspectors cost the taxpayer £4.8 million. After five years of scrutinising what they claim to be declining standards, they now cost £11 million. Wheelbarrows are needed to cart their paperwork into the nation's schoolrooms. They recently sent 25,000 schools a 23-item survey featuring such questions as "What are the similarities and differences between social and moral development?" Small wonder they had just six replies. Schools were too busy trying to teach.

I am sure the professional audit has its uses. I like to know that my doctor, lawyer, accountant or bank manager has qualifications, operates according to rules and is up-to-date in his or her knowledge. I take residual comfort from the deterrent value of negligence law. With schools there is little such reassurance, and teachers' associations have never bothered themselves with professional standards. Teachers are not "struck off" by their peers. Too rarely are they sacked by their employers. Hence the need for an inspectorate.

Yet an audit should convey meaning. Parents need to know what is going on inside a school, and that it lives up to some professional standard. In cities, where parental choice is feasible, some means of comparing adjacent schools helps both choice and monitoring, especially where there is no good reason for a wide variation in performance. To be known as the worst school in town might lead governors and the local authority to take remedial action, devastating though it must be to the morale of staff, parents and children. All of this is to be overwhelmed by a national league table. Such tables may be of use in the case of private boarding schools. For local day schools they are mere Whitehall games. They cannot compare like with like, or measure a school's real achievement in responding to the challenge of its neighbourhood. They

are an institutional beauty parade, reducing education to the level of a Eurovision Song Contest.

The Woodhead/Shephard thesis is that a bad professional — in this case a head teacher — is best improved by being publicly humiliated. A recent report by the Royal Statistical Society dismissed such league table comparisons as meaningless. Researchers pointed out that few schools have enough pupils for annual data to be reliably comparable. A flu epidemic can alter a national ranking by a hundred places. Primary schools are even smaller institutions. I cannot believe a reputable statistician would go near an attempt at a national league table.

As for yesterday's lumping of good and bad together to validate a welter of gloomy generalisations about national standards, the real comfort from the deterrent value of negligence law. With schools there is little such reassurance, and teachers' associations have never bothered themselves with professional standards. Teachers are not "struck off" by their peers. Too rarely are they sacked by their employers. Hence the need for an inspectorate.

Yet an audit should convey meaning. Parents need to know what is going on inside a school, and that it lives up to some professional standard. In cities, where parental choice is feasible, some means of comparing adjacent schools helps both choice and monitoring, especially where there is no good reason for a wide variation in performance. To be known as the worst school in town might lead governors and the local authority to take remedial action, devastating though it must be to the morale of staff, parents and children. All of this is to be overwhelmed by a national league table. Such tables may be of use in the case of private boarding schools. For local day schools they are mere Whitehall games. They cannot compare like with like, or measure a school's real achievement in responding to the challenge of its neighbourhood. They

sult is equally unhelpful to individual schools. It is like the Board of Trade announcing that 40 per cent of British companies "could do better" or that one in five is "disturbingly weak". A measure of the quality of this exercise is the unsurprising discovery by the inspectors that two-thirds of schools measured as "outstanding" have a selective intake at 11. As a piece of social science, this ranks with discovering that three-star restaurants serve remarkably good food or that the rich have lots of money.

Professional league tables are now sprawling across the public sector. They have crept into hospital waiting-lists, child mortality figures, crime records, police clear-up rates, 999-call response times, university research output, courtroom efficiency and Royal Family engagements. They arise from a legitimate search for value for money, but rely only on "value" that can be calibrated. Such old-fashioned professional inputs as trust, care, reassurance, time spent listening and the creation of confidence are not measurable. Nor is such a result as a healthy, alert or

well-educated person. In a league table culture, only what is measurable counts.

This is government by exorcism. I suppose the pillory had its uses in the Middle Ages, as had the ducking-stool. Not many drowned. During China's Cultural Revolution, any teacher who deviated from a national norm was forced to wear a dunce cap and stand penitent in a public place. Students of the Great Terror know that a proletarian likes nothing so much as a profession in a state of ridicule. To politicians, the nomination of the "best and worst schools in Britain" is the least-cost way of appearing to be doing something.

If the Government response were to devote money and care to helping the "worst", there might be a justification for this crudity. But the whole drift of yesterday's announcement was that the quality of a school depends solely on good teaching as assessed in government tests. Thus, Crofton Junior School in Orpington, was said to excel — almost twice the national average score at English — because of the organisation of its teaching. This is the latest orthodoxy. Everybody can see that Crofton excels principally because it is middle-class, all-white and in Orpington, not Southwark. But nobody dares say so.

I am mystified at what purpose is served by the new political correctness. League tables are about rewarding success and punishing failure, but the concept of success and failure that they inculcate is naive. To all criticism of league tables, Mrs Shephard and her officials reply not that they are valid but that they are "popular". So is the Eurovision contest. True, tables get easy coverage. Readers enjoy marvelling at success and gloating over failure. But such pulp fiction is not usually part of the public service mission. We expect policy to be directed at improving the quality of a service overall.

If subsidy is needed, it should be directed especially at families least able to help themselves. But I cannot imagine a more crass way of crushing their self-esteem and that of their children than a national league table of primary schools. Perhaps the poor have had their day. But the Tory party's contempt for their future schooling must be redressed. As a victim said of J.B. Priestley's famous inspector, "I remember how he looked and what he made me feel: fire and blood and anguish."

Simon Jenkins

Rifkind should beware

Don't pander to the sceptics, says

Sir Leon Brittan

Last year there was an increasing realisation on both sides of the Atlantic that the relationship between Europe and the United States remained the most important relationship for each party, but that recent developments, such as the end of the Cold War and the successful Gatt negotiation, made its modernisation essential.

As European Commissioner in charge of relations with America, I put to the Commission and the Council of Ministers last summer a proposal that the EU and the US should launch a major initiative to strengthen ties in a whole range of policies. This was warmly welcomed by the Americans, and after months of negotiation the initiative was crowned in Madrid last December, when President Clinton joined the EU in signing the blueprint for this new relationship.

Throughout the process, the Commission worked closely with the Spanish presidency and was bolstered by valuable support from Britain, Germany and others who see transatlantic ties as vital to their national interests. The Commission is now pressing ahead with a similar initiative towards Canada.

There can be few European policies which dovetail so neatly with British interests. Most significantly of all, the initiative has kept alive the flame of freer trade across the Atlantic — which is very dear to Britain. It does not create a full free trade area, but if, after a joint study by the Commission and the American Government, it is deemed politically, economically and legally feasible to cut all tariffs, a free trade area could ultimately result.

So far so good. A substantial advance in transatlantic relations, one of Britain's major foreign policy objectives, has been achieved by the European Union with no help from the anti-European tub-thumpers in Westminster, but with great support from the British Government. It has been achieved by making "friends and influencing people" in Europe. That is proof, if proof were needed, that a positive attitude to Europe pays far more dividends than the penny-wise and pound-foolish approach of defending "national sovereignty" at all costs.

Britain on its own could not have achieved this major step. But by joining with EU partners who share Britain's priorities, effective action was possible. This illustrates the point made by Raymond Setz, former American Ambassador in London, that Britain can maximise its influence on America by working through Europe. The realistic choice for Britain is not between America and Europe. It is, rather, between seeming semi-detached from and hostile to Europe — as the Euro-sceptics wish — and being positive towards Europe and therefore influential in strengthening the transatlantic relationship. If Britain wants to go further, as the Foreign Secretary's most welcome speech yesterday suggests, it must persuade its EU partners that free trade with America is in their interest too. The Euro-American initiative proposed by Brussels and backed by all 15 EU countries, shows that in advocating closer relations Britain is pushing at a door already two-thirds open.

That door will open wider only if others feel that Britain wants to strengthen rather than dilute Europe by removing more barriers to trade with America. In my view, persuading them of this is perfectly possible, provided that the Foreign Secretary's positive approach is not distorted by those wishing to misrepresent it as giving encouragement to Euro-sceptics who wish to detach Britain from Europe. These objectives can be achieved only through Europe.

The same applies to the removal of economic barriers worldwide. Europe as a whole, negotiating as a single unit, has opened far more world markets than any one country could have done on its own, as even the most blinkered sceptic would be hard pushed to deny. The biggest bonfire of trade barriers that the world has ever known was ignited by Brussels through Oat, with the support of Britain and other countries. Those who had blocked the deal in the past were won over because the advocates of free trade convinced them that Europe would be stronger in the world as a result. And hard though it is for Euro-sceptics to swallow, the European Commission was the toughest advocate of them all.

The British people are told by much of the media to see every policy emanating from across the Channel as threatening our right to govern ourselves, not as a chance to boost our influence. The development of Europe's relationship with America shows how untrue this is.

This Government must show that such fears are unfounded, and must highlight the benefits of EU membership. It has chosen to do so in its reaction to the new era in Euro-American relations, and wisely so. It must apply the same approach elsewhere, weighing up every issue in the balance of British interests, rather than heeding those who cry "Save our sovereignty" whenever anything comes from Brussels, however much it may be in Britain's and Europe's interest.

Don't call us

UPROAR IN the world of easy listening: a hoaxer has been trying to bump off Radio 2's disc jockeys.

The individual, who clearly harbours a bizarre vendetta against certain celebrity voices, has caused panic by spreading rumours that presenters have expired.

Three times recently the man has set up an elaborate web of lies to persuade newspapers and TV companies that a particular presenter has died. Radio 2, with a line-up that includes Terry Wogan, Jimmy Young, and the linguistically-challenged Derek Jameson, refuses to confirm the identity of the targeted broadcasters.

The caller's tactics vary, but this week he rang a newspaper and pretended to be an agent, offering obituary details and bursting into tears for extra effect.

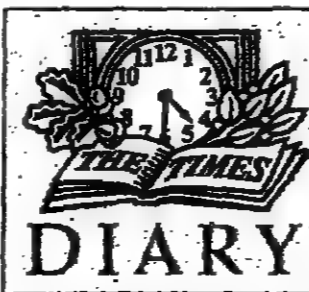
"The hoaxer seems to have a very detailed knowledge of how news organisations work," says a BBC spokesman. "He seems to be very calculated in causing as much distress as possible. It is very chilling. This is not a joke. It is the act of a very sick individual."

● Kenneth Clarke and Peter Lilley gave simultaneous speeches at the

London School of Economics yesterday. The Social Security Secretary, who was pelted with flour and eggs on his last visit, gave a well-publicised talk to the Conservative Association and was heckled on his way in. The Chancellor's address to the Centre for Economic Performance, however, was private and discreet and he was untroubled. "I call the Social Security Secretary my human shield," said Clarke cheerfully.

Ure mistake

THE MISERY continues for Yorkshire Water. Now they are running scared of the Devil. Richmondshire District Council has ordered them to pull down a bridge over the River Ure in Wensleydale built as part of plans to extract water. The official reason is that planning permission had not been sought. However, locals claim the council is heading their warnings about disturbing Beelzebub. According to folklore, bridges over the river failed to stay up until the devil agreed a pact with villagers in the 12th century. He ate a farmer's dog in return for building the bridge.



"He left one stone missing, saying that if ever it should be completed he would eat the locals," says Jacqueline Wells, a parish councillor. "We told Yorkshire Water that if they ever completed their bridge the wrath of the Devil would be unleashed. Now they are removing it."

All change

A CERTAIN amount of regrouping among the cast of the rugby show *The Changing Room* which kicks off in the West End tonight. One of the stars, David Michaels, who was to play the part of the full back, was being operated on yesterday for a broken leg. He had picked up the injury while playing soccer.

The incident occurred when Michaels turned out for the National

Theatre's side, Teatro Nazionale, in a Sunday league match. "The chap who was playing the reserve has been brought in to shore up the side at fullback and the understudy is now first reserve," says a spokesman.

Exit, Paxo

JEREMY PAXMAN made an early departure from the Oldie of the Year lunch yesterday in London. It was a pity, really, for the Wannabe



Mrs Merton: golden oldie

Oldie of the Year award went to Caroline Hook, more commonly known as the northern housewife with a perm, the television chat-show host and recent *Times* columnist Mrs Merton.

As Ned Sherrin introduced the Merton *faux naïf* interviewing style he explained that it was not abrasive: "No Paxman assault from her." Nevertheless, her technique is not something that Paxo appreciates himself — last year he refused an invitation to appear on her show.

● Cedric Brown was curiously camera-shy yesterday. After his news conference, from which TV cameras were banned, he rushed to hide in a side room, before being coaxed out for undignified interrogation in a corridor.

Wicket maiden

THE troubled cricket World Cup may survive until its opening ceremony in Calcutta on Sunday but now even that event is the subject of controversy. Local politicians are bowling bouncers at the ceremony organisers over plans for what they argue is a suggestive strip-show.

Sushmita Sen, a former Miss Universe and a heroine in the city, is scheduled to appear wearing



Sushmita: no flagging

scarf-sized national flags of the 12 participating countries, which she will then peel off and hand to team captains.

Protestations from organisers that she will be decent underneath have fallen on deaf ears. "What is planned is totally vulgar," said Samar Chakraborty, a Congress leader in Calcutta. Police expect excited crowds. "The World Cup has enough problems and we don't want another controversy," says a senior officer.

P.H.S



GREAT SCOTT

Prepare for a blinding blizzard of claim and counter-claim

Today or tomorrow, an enormous tome will thud onto selected ministers' desks. Two years later, the report by Sir Richard Scott into government policy on arms sales to Iraq is finally complete. The coming days will be dominated by the release of the Scott report, by selective leaks, alleged leaks and strategies for defence, attack and survival.

Readers may be forgiven if they have forgotten what it is about and why it is important. In a sentence, ministers stand accused of misleading Parliament about the sale of military equipment to Iraq and of trying to keep secret evidence that would have prevented directors of the Matrix Churchill company being unjustly sent to jail. The issue is not the rightness or wrongness of government export policy, but the uses and abuses of official secrecy. The charge against the Government is that in the name of the public interest, it resorted to measures aimed at avoiding political embarrassment.

Politicians are gripped by how they can control the consequences of this inquiry. Top of John Major's priorities is the avoidance of a ministerial resignation. Stung by Tony Blair's recent accusation that he buckles under pressure, he will do all in his power to keep the two most vulnerable ministers, William Waldegrave and Sir Nicholas Lyell, in their posts. If he manages to do so, he hopes he will be judged as vindicated by Sir Richard. If he does not, Labour will jubilantly claim its own victory.

To this end, the Government seems prepared to use every power at its disposal. One of these is the ability to control the report's publication schedule. For those politicians whose careers are on the line, the defence strategy can begin in earnest tomorrow. For other parties to the issue, lawyers, the unjustly accused and the pressure groups for civil liberties, the wait will be longer. Ministers will have a languid week in which to reflect upon Scott's findings and prepare their soundbites. They have allowed no such luxury to anyone else.

Journalists and opposition MPs will have, instead, a scant hour or two late on February 15 to digest a 2,000-page document and pass their first (and, from the Government's point

of view, most significant) judgment upon its implications. This may seem a small matter — of concern chiefly to newspapers. But it is also one of the instruments of control that the Government is prepared to use against a report which it commissioned three years ago but would rather it had not. A machine wedded to secrecy is being used against a judge appointed to examine the harmful consequences of that very addition.

For journalists and opposition spokesmen to absorb 2,000 pages and form a lasting judgment upon them takes longer than half an afternoon. Yet the reaction that readers will find in Friday week's newspapers and the instant attack that Labour will be expected to mount will necessarily be upon the basis of a hurried reading of the report.

The summary that will accompany the findings will have been drafted by the Government, not by the author. It will be all too easy to highlight passages that exonerate ministers and to pass over those that do not. When the Franks Committee reported on the events leading up to the Falklands conflict, great initial attention was drawn to the one paragraph in the conclusion — quite at variance with the rest of the report — that portrayed government actions in a rosy light. Inevitably this tended to colour the coverage of the findings.

Journalists will obviously do their best to avoid being "spun" by spokesmen of all the groups involved. They have been warned of what to expect by Lord Howe's attempts to smear the character of Sir Richard and the terms of his inquiry. They will try not to allow the selective leaks that will undoubtedly appear between now and next Thursday to influence their final judgment.

Ministers should be clear, however, that the full judgment on Scott will not be complete by Friday morning, and the fate of ministers will not be determined by Friday week's headlines. The influence of the report upon the conduct of government will go further than the achievement or avoidance of a ministerial resignation. The Scott report will shine a light into Whitehall cellars that have never before been illuminated. The consequences will take time to emerge.

WISE VIRGINS

The Age of Innocence is getting shorter

Not so very long ago the problems pages of magazines targeted at teenage girls offered advice on acne creams and that first kiss. Now they are more likely to discuss contraceptive pills and that first night. The Tory MP Peter Luff tried yesterday to limit the access of adolescents to explicit material in magazines by introducing a ten-minute rule Bill in the Commons. It is unlikely that the Bill will pass into law, and even less likely that legislation would achieve his aim, but Mr Luff's ten minutes have not been in vain. Exploiting adolescent sexuality for money is an ugly business and it needs to be fought.

It is impossible to ignore the curiosity about sex among teenagers and naïve to imagine that their magazines could avoid exploring emotions. Indeed, given the embarrassment some parents feel, magazines could play a part in educating teenagers and encouraging responsibility. But few seem inclined to preach the virtues of restraint.

More, with a significant readership under 16, prints a new sexual position for its readers to try every fortnight. Looks carries a feature on "Pleasure-play". TV Hits advises a reader who inquires about oral sex to "lie back and enjoy it". The magazines may insert warnings, but readers are left with the impression that most girls of their age are already sexually active. Peer pressure is insidious at any time, but few are more vulnerable than adolescents. Fashion matters to teenagers and in these magazines chastity has all the allure of a ra-ra skirt.

Fashion magazines have already played a part in blighting the lives of many young women, by draping the most attractive of clothes on surreally thin models. The dominance of this skewed notion of beauty has coincided with a worrying increase in the number of young women with dietary disorders. How much more irresponsible is it to encourage a hedonistic attitude to sex when teenage pregnancies are still too high and evidence strongly suggests that early sexual activity increases the risk of cervical cancer?

Mr Luff, like many parents, was shocked to see just how explicit were the magazines his ten-year-old daughter read. His Bill would lead publishers to print the approved age range of a magazine's readership on the front cover to protect the innocent. Sadly, his measure would probably prove counter-productive. Branding a magazine "adults only" gives it all the allure of the forbidden. The answer is not the heavy hand of statute but closer parental control and an honest searching of editorial consciences.

Parents should make it clear that new sexual positions are not suitable reading matter for girls under 16, reassure their daughters that they are in the majority if they wait, and warn them of the real dangers of early experimentation. Editors and proprietors should ask themselves how happy they are to bid for pocket money by promising sex. They have a duty of care to their readers as much as their marketing departments. They should tread more warily.

COLOMBIA'S 'CALIGATE'

President Samper should now prepare for departure

"Renuncie, Samper" — "Resign, Samper" — is a cry now heard across Colombia. The country is still old-fashioned, so the cry is always made in the polite form of the imperative; but as the clamour grows daily more impassioned, the position of the man who is the focus of this ire has become indefensible. Ernesto Samper, Colombia's President, may soon face impeachment by his country's Congress. He stands accused of having accepted, in his presidential campaign in 1994, millions of dollars in donations from the Cali drugs cartel. Judicial officers, acting with integrity and courage, will soon pass the results of their investigations to a congressional committee. Since Señor Samper's Liberal Party enjoys a majority in both parliamentary houses, he may yet salvage his much-tarnished political career. That, however, would be a shame for Colombia, and the least satisfactory end to the sordid affair.

The evidence in the public domain is so far inconclusive. But there is no question that Señor Samper has lost the confidence of the electorate. Key ministers and ambassadors have resigned. Both the treasurer and the manager of his election campaign are in prison. When the latter stated recently that the President knew of the tainted source of much of his campaign money — which the President immediately, and strongly, denied — nationwide polls revealed that few were prepared to believe Señor Samper.

The evaporation of confidence has not occurred in Colombia alone: there has, for

months now, been an almost total collapse in relations between the American Administration and the Samper Government. The activities of the Drug Enforcement Administration, and the extent of Colombian collaboration in the fight against the *narco-traficantes*, have suffered as a result of "Caligate".

Colombia's people could have to pay a hefty price for Señor Samper's refusal to step down. On March 1, the American administration is due to announce its annual "certification" of countries engaged in the battle against drugs. This brings all sorts of benefits to the certified country, most importantly a large package of American aid and a preferential tariff rate for the export to the US of a range of goods. Last year, Colombia received only a "conditional" certification, based on "American national security interests". But the conclusion was then recorded that Colombia's fight against drug-traffickers was less than wholehearted.

An adverse decision by the US in March would not be without its risks: anti-American feeling in Colombia, now dormant, may be rekindled. Señor Samper, if still in office, would be ill-advised to make populist capital out of Washington's censure. Worryingly, he has not often spurned a populist trick: only last month he sought to circumvent the judicial process by calling for a referendum on his fitness for office. That will not happen, of course, as the rule of law is still held in esteem by Colombians. Señor Samper, however, is not. He should find another job.

LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

1 Pennington Street, London E1 9XN Telephone 0171-762 5000

Preserving the Kohl convoy from shots across the bows

From Mr Michael Welch

Sir, The Euro-sceptics' advocacy of the indiscriminate use of the British veto at the forthcoming inter-governmental conference, such as that put forward by William Cash in his letter of January 27, reveals their intellectual bankruptcy.

As Chancellor Kohl made clear at Leuven last week (report, February 3), our European partners are determined to press ahead to closer integration because they believe that their national interest requires it; it would be neither morally acceptable nor politically wise for Britain to use her veto to frustrate the wishes of 14 other sovereign states.

The last person to attempt this kind of bullying was General de Gaulle in 1965. After nine months of the "empty chair" he was forced to back down because the other member states realised that the Community could not work if one member required its national interest to prevail over all the others.

If our Government attempted to follow his example the leaders of the European convoy might well come to the conclusion that it was not worth jeopardising the entire fleet for the sake of one recalcitrant member who refused to keep on station. Willing and active co-operation between independent sovereign states can work only if there is an underlying willingness to co-operate.

While the Atlantic Alliance has triumphantly seen off the Soviet threat, the European Community has neutralised the aggressive nationalism that has disfigured so much of our common history by making war between the partners impossible. Most Europeans rightly value this achievement, and they are not likely to allow the British to undermine the process that has made it possible.

Yours faithfully,
MICHAEL WELSH
(Chief Executive),
Action Centre for Europe Limited,
181 Town Lane, Whittle Le Woods,
Chorley, Lancashire,
February 5.

From Sir Anthony Meyer

Sir, There are valid arguments for relaxing some of the Maastricht criteria for European monetary union, and even for postponing it; and these are quite fairly set out in your leading article of February 5, "A heavy tread".

However, the Germans and others are rightly suspicious of such advice coming from those who have not only been the slowest in the convoy, but have boasted of their slowness; and they are equally right to insist that the European single market will remain precarious until it has monetary stability.

When Chancellor Kohl warns that nationalism means war, he is not overlooking the fact that it was NATO which averted a war with the Soviet Union; he is reminding us that it has been the European Community principle of pooled sovereignty which has imposed restraint on its member states, and that if this principle is rejected there is a very real danger that governments in both Eastern and Western Europe will feel compelled to protect their vital economic and political interests by all means, including force.

I am, etc.
ANTHONY MEYER,
European Movement — UK,
11 Tufnell Street, SW1,
February 5.

From Mr Ian Curteis

Sir, In his speech invoking the possibilities of war if the rest of us fail to conform to the sort of Europe Germany wants Chancellor Kohl once more misuses the word "nationalism".

Nationalism is the sense of nationhood, no more and no less. It is as natural and healthy an instinct to a citizen of any country as the sense of belonging to the unit of a family is to children. To imply that there is something sinister and retrogressive about it, and that a nation is really no more than an administrative unit, flies in the face of two thousand years of European art and literature and all

we know about the human psyche.

To ignore nationalism is not only foolish, it is dangerous — as the bloody reversion of the nations press-ganged to make up the artificial USSR, and the artificial Yugoslavia, shows so clearly. To attempt to build a new Europe by suppressing it is like designing a house which ignores the forces of gravity, and the result would be the same.

Yours truly,
IAN CURTEIS,
The Mill House, Coin St Aldwyns,
Gloucestershire,
February 5.

From Mr P. A. Rawlings

Sir, How little we learn from history. Today you quote Chancellor Kohl as saying that "the slowest ship in the convoy [Britain] should not be allowed to determine the speed". Perhaps he should be reminded that the convoy system was developed to combat German aggression (ie, the U-boat threat) and only worked because the convoy did travel at the speed of the slowest ship.

Yours faithfully,
P. A. RAWLINGS,
6 School Road,
Sible Hedingham, Halstead, Essex,
February 3.

From Mr Laurence Cottarell

Sir, Herr Kohl takes his evident aversion to militarism a bit far when he transfers an old cavalry metaphor to the high seas as "the slowest ship in the convoy should not be allowed to determine its speed".

This transfer is the more remarkable when one considers that the original concept is often attributed to, among others, his countryman, General von Seydlitz (1721-83): "the speed of a cavalry charge is the speed of the slowest horse".

Yours faithfully,
LAURENCE COTTARELL,
121 St Paul's Wood Hill,
St Pauls Cray, Kent,
February 3.

Electoral reform

From the Reverend David Mason,
Chairman of the
Electoral Reform Society

Sir, The single transferable vote would not have the effect on British politics that Anthony Howard has claimed ("Hemsworth, PR and the lessons for new Labour", February 3). The experience with STV in Ireland is that it does not lead to a great proliferation of parties and a party would need around 15 per cent of the vote to be elected in a constituency.

The alternative vote which he proposes is not a proportional system. If you look to the example of the 1990 general election in Australia, where it is used, it led to the Liberal/National coalition, with more votes getting fewer seats than the Labour opposition.

The British university seats, until 1990 used the single transferable vote, not the alternative vote, in two or three-member, though not, of course, single-member seats.

It is up to the British people to decide on the type of democracy they want in a referendum, not for politicians to decide for them behind closed doors.

Yours sincerely,
DAVID MASON,
Chairman,
Electoral Reform Society,
6 Channel Street, Blackfriars, SE1,
February 5.

Wolves in the wild

From Nicholas Wilski

Sir, I read with great interest Jim Crumley's article (Weekend, January 27; see also letter, February 2) about a project to bring back to the Scottish Highlands animals such as wolves, beavers and lynx.

My father is Polish and we often go on holiday to the Tatra mountains where wolves, bears, lynx and wild boar still live in the wild. It makes the pine forests of Poland so much more exciting to think that those dangerous and frightening animals are there.

I think that it is a very good idea to make the Scottish forests also exciting.

Yours etc.
NICHOLAS WILSKI (aged 11),
Claremont CP School,
Banner Farm Road,
Tumbridge Wells, Kent,
February 2.

From Mr John Gudgeon

Sir, Mr Roger Panaman, who writes to you (February 2) on behalf of the Carnivore Wildlife Trust, himself appears to live in Oxfordshire.

In view of his comments on the diversity of the wolf's habitat, may one ask why no one seems to be proposing to reintroduce the animal there, specifically Church Street, Kidlington?

Yours truly,
JOHN GUDGEON,
2 Clackclose Road,
Downham Market, Norfolk,
February 2.

Business letters, page 29

Letters should carry a daytime telephone number. They may be faxed to 0171-762-5046.

Averting a catastrophe in Burundi

From Mr Tony Cunningham, MEP
for Cumbria and Lancashire North
(Socialist Group (Labour))

Sir, The international community was too late to avert catastrophe in Rwanda. When the media finally started covering the genocide, it was too late for international peacekeepers to act. UN troops were sitting in their barracks watching the massacre, able to do nothing because they had no mandate to act. Millions had died before the international community was ready to react.

We now know that a similar situation is just waiting to happen in Burundi. Members of the European Parliament heard on January 30 in Brussels that tension is mounting in the country. There are two million refugees and displaced people. The capital, Bujumbura, is now a Tutsi city. It used to be a mixed city of Hutu and Tutsi. Ethnic cleansing has already taken place. The Government has asked some non-governmental organisations to leave Burundi.

The European Union, the Organisation for African Unity, the UN and NGOs all want to do something to

help. But a lack of co-ordination is hindering humanitarian efforts. Of the possibility of sending peacekeeping troops into Burundi, Emma Bonino, the European Commissioner in charge of humanitarian affairs, told Members of the European Parliament that the EU's efforts are severely limited by its lack of a common foreign policy.

The EU is spending half a million dollars a day in the central lakes region on humanitarian aid. But keeping people alive in the short term will not solve the long-term problems. The international institutions need to devise mechanisms to allow them to help prevent economic and ethnic tensions from escalating into civil war and genocide. In the short term they must act to diffuse the potential for genocide.

Yours faithfully,
TONY CUNNINGHAM
(European Labour Party's
Spokesperson on Development),
European Parliament,
97-113 Rue Belliard,
B-1047 Brussels,
February 6.

University funding

From Mrs Kimberley Jordan Reeman

Sir, Higher education is not and never has been free in Canada, or in the United States, nor has anyone ever suggested or expected it to be (letters, February 2). Students pay a yearly tuition fee in addition to paying for their books and accommodation.

If required, financial assistance is available in the form of repayable grants, or, for the academically outstanding, scholarships. The majority of students work from April to September to finance their education.

This system engenders a certain commitment and maturity among Canadian and American students, who choose university not as a place to waste three government-funded years of their lives, but for the love of knowledge and as preparation for a career.

Higher education is not a right. It is and should be a privilege, for which my generation (I am a 41-year-old Canadian graduate) was paying the equivalent of £300 a year in tuition fees twenty years ago.

Yours,
KIMBERLEY JORDAN REEMAN,
Blue Pines,
Eaton Park Road,
Cobham, Surrey,
January 30.

Instant off-pit

From Mr Robert Garwood

Sir, I had reason to ring the British Gas inquiry line today. Perhaps in view of its record on customer complaints it carried a recorded message: "Thank you for calling. All our staff are currently attending an important briefing. Please call back later."

Yours truly,
R. GARWOOD,
60 Kirby Drive,
Barton Hills,
Luton, Bedfordshire,
February 6.

Welles's whale

From Mr Simon Callow
Sir, It is one thing to be panned in one's lifetime (First night, January 31), quite another to be falsely maligned after one's death, as has happened to poor Orson Welles, who Benedict Nightingale uses as a stick with which to beat me and my production of *Les Enfants du Paradis*; guilt by association!

Welles did not, as Nightingale alleges, try to put the whale on stage in his 1955 *Moby Dick* rehearsed at the Duke of York's theatre. It was a notably economical and evocative evening, much admired at the time: Sir Peter Hall still regards it as one of the best productions of his theatre-going life. Perhaps your critic was thinking of Welles's version of *Around the World in Eighty Days*. Told by *The New York Times* that he had put everything in it bar the kitchen sink, Welles repaired the omission the following night by appearing at the curtain call carrying that item of kitchen furniture.

Yours sincerely,
SIMON CALLOW,
c/o Marina Martin Associates,
12-13 Poland Street, W1,
February 2.

True forgiveness

From Mrs Claire Foster

Sir, Together with the pupils to whom I teach religious studies I was interested by Matthew Parris's honest if despatching account of the impossibility of true forgiveness of others — and even more interested in the range of responses his column evoked (article, January 22; letters, January 27, February 3).

I wondered in particular at the accuracy of Mr Richard Gunning's view, that "Christians are not supposed to like their enemies". He is correct, of course. Christians are not supposed to like their enemies, they are supposed to love them (Matthew v. 44; Luke vi. 27).

The love that Christ taught, universal in its scope and unchanging in the face of any change, would not edit the "hurt file" in Matthew Parris's brain. It would delete it altogether.

Yours faithfully,
CLAIRE FOSTER,
40 Cardross Street, W6,
February 1.

From Mr David McKeand

Sir, Christian forgiveness: well, yes. But who is to forgive the insufferable conceit of all us forgivers?

Yours faithfully,
DAVID MCKEAND,
Middle Beards Mill,
Leonard Stanley,
Stonehouse, Gloucestershire,
February 1.

Ways to fall asleep

From Mrs Ada Day

Sir, One of our Methodist ministers gave us some good advice (letters, February 5). "Don't count the sheep — talk to the shepherd."

Yours faithfully,
ADA DAY,
26 Nickson Court, Hazlemere,
High Wycombe, Buckinghamshire,
February 6.

'Forums' needed for pop composers

From Sir Andrew Lloyd Webber

Sir, I am sorry that I did not make entirely clear to your Arts Correspondent what I feel about contemporary pop (report, January 29; letters, February 5). For more than a decade, I and others have been trying to create forums for the discovery of new composers. This is why I support the National Youth Music Theatre, with two clear objectives. First, to encourage the NYMT's wonderful group of performers, and secondly to bring to the attention of the creative world a young and enthusiastic musical theatre group ready, willing and able to perform new works.

When I sponsored the NYMT's visit to Broadway last year, it was to put them under a spotlight — to show just what they could do. They received fabulous reviews and played to full houses, but the lack of coverage of their success in the UK did not encourage young writers to come forward. A full-page advertisement in *The New York Times* has not yet borne fruit.

Musical theatre badly needs new writers and pop should be one of their influences. However, I continue to feel, from a musical theatre perspective, that the last decade in pop was not very encouraging: it was a pretty barren period melody-wise.

I am not a fan of compilation music, but I think it would be very hard to put together a compilation evening of any pop writer from the mid-80s to mid-90s in the way that has been successfully done on Broadway with the songs of, say, Leiber and Stoller in *Smokey Joe's Cafe*.

However, I totally agree with those who have commented that the pop charts have taken a turn for the better in the last few months. I for one would be very excited if new writers like Noel Gallagher started experimenting in the theatre and I hope that the recent trend, particularly in British pop, continues apace.

Yours faithfully,
ANDREW LLOYD WEBBER,
22 Tower Street, WC2,
February 5.

Jazz legacy

From Mr Daniel Lightman

Sir, Replying to the assertion by the obituarist of Gerry Mulligan (January 22) that "most great jazz artists have matured only in their fifties", Mr Solomon (letter, January 26) rightly points out that many jazz masters did not even live to the age of 50. He should have added that several of those (few) jazz greats who did survive that long had ceased to make any significant musical contribution many years before they reached 50.

In some cases this was due to ill-health — Buddy Bolden lived to 62 but spent his last two decades in a lunatic asylum; in others, because the public lost interest in music it regarded as outmoded — Jelly Roll Morton's polyphonic sound was no longer appreciated in the big band era; and some — such as Artie Shaw, still alive today at 85 but retired from performing for over 40 years — simply became disillusioned with the jazz world.

Yours faithfully,
DANIEL LIGHTMAN,
5b Prince Arthur Road, NW3.

Cricket commentary

From Mr Najam Butt

Sir, The refusal of the Australian and West Indian cricket teams to take part in the Sri Lanka leg of the World Cup (report, February 6) should be condemned. The organisers should not reschedule the fixtures.

Would these players have considered abandoning an international fixture in England if, say, the IRA had just bombed London? I do not believe so. This appears to be a petty continuation of the bad spirit in which recent matches against Sri Lanka have been played. Remember, the Aussies were threatening to withdraw before last week's bomb in Colombo.

Yours sincerely,
N. BUTT,
41 Jordan Road, Perivale, Middlesex.



COURT CIRCULAR

CLARENCE HOUSE
February 6: The Hon Mrs Rhodes has succeeded Dame Frances Campbell-Preston as Lady-in-Waiting to Queen Elizabeth The Queen Mother.

ST JAMES'S PALACE
February 6: The Prince of Wales, Colonel-in-Chief, The Royal Gurkha Rifles, this morning received Lieutenant-General Sir Peter Duffell (Colonel).

His Royal Highness later planted a tree and attended a Reception at the residence of the Indian High Commissioner to celebrate Indo-British Friendship.

The Prince of Wales this evening visited the "Design of the Times" Exhibition and attended a Centenary Dinner

at the Royal College of Art, London SW7.

KENSINGTON PALACE
February 6: The Princess of Wales, President, this morning visited the Hospital for Sick Children, Great Ormond Street, London WC1.

YORK HOUSE
February 6: The Duke of Kent will this evening attend a reception for the Transnet Libertas Choir of South Africa, hosted by the Commonwealth Secretary-General, Marlborough House, Pall Mall, London SW1.

THATCHED HOUSE LODGE
February 6: Princess Alexandra this morning visited the Cassel Hospital, Ham Common, Richmond, Surrey.

Today's royal engagements

The Prince of Wales, as Colonel-in-Chief of The Cheshire Regiment, will visit the 1st Battalion at Okeford Barracks, Cambridge, at 10.45 and will open the new Peterborough environment centre and the Eco House and view an exhibition of the work of the Peterborough Environment City Trust at 33 Westgate, Peterborough, at 2.45.

The Duke of Gloucester will open the science centre at Peter Symonds College, Owens Road, Winchester, at 11.30 and will visit Bendick of Mayfield factory at Moorfield Road at 2.00.

The Duke of Kent, as Patron of the British Menswear Guild, will visit Aquascutum, Trafalgar Road, Kettering, Northamptonshire, at 10.30; will visit Ilmore Engineering, Quay Road, Brixworth, at 11.30; and will visit Follwings Flexible Packaging, Tester Road, Moulton Park, Industrial Estate, Northampton, at 2.00.

Today's events

The Queen's Life Guard mounts at Horse Guards at 11.00. The Queen's Guard at Buckingham Palace at 11.30.

Lord Tavener

The life barony conferred upon Mr Dick Tavener, first Baron Tavener, is gazetted by the name, style and title of Baron Tavener, of Pimlico in the City of Westminster.

Today's birthdays

Mrs G.T. Banks, former Registrar General for England and Wales, 65; Lord Belvoir, 73; Mr P.W. Bennett, former chairman, W.H. Smith and Son Holdings, 79; Mrs Caroline Bingham, writer, 58; Miss Doris Bryan, actress, 72; Mr Gerald Davies, rugby player, 51; the Earl of Harewood, 73; Mr Tony Howitt, management consultant, 70; Mr Ian Jack, Editor, *Granite*, 51; Mr Michael James, writer and nuclear energy adviser, 55; the

Hon Peter Jay, writer and broadcaster, 59; Lord Keith of Kinkel, 74; Mrs L.R. Langslow, chief executive, English Nature, 51; Sir John Leahy, diplomat, 68; Sir George Mosley, civil servant, 71; Sir Geoffrey Mulcahy, chief executive, Kingfisher, 54; Sir Philip Myers, former Chief Constable, North Wales Police, 65; Mr David Park, author, 43; Earl St Aldwyn, 46; Mr R.W. Watson, former director-general, NFI, 70.

Premium Bonds

The following Premium Bond prize winners have been announced:
£100,000: 38WT 892697, winner has a holding of £3,805 and comes from West Yorkshire; 43QS 464498, £20,000, Richmond upon Thames.
£50,000: 41RW 159488, £15,000, Westminster, London; 15MW 593252, £10,000, Essex; 45LN 740577, £10,000, West Sussex.
£25,000: 19AZ 662750, £3,000, Durham; 23XW 212174, £2,600, Durham; 27PP 995849, £5,701, Highlands and Islands; 46EF 19170, £8,000, West Glamorgan.

Sir Godfrey Agnew

A service of thanksgiving for the life of Sir Godfrey Agnew, KCVO, CB, will be held in St George's Chapel, Windsor Castle, on Wednesday, March 27, at noon.

Mr Denzil Sebag-Montefiore

The memorial service for Denzil Sebag-Montefiore will be held at Bevis Marks Synagogue, London, EC3, on Monday, April 15, at noon.

Luncheon

Toyabey Hall, Mr Max Hastings, Editor of the *Evening Standard*, will be the guest speaker at a luncheon held yesterday at Toyabey Hall, Mr John Profumo, President, was in the chair. The Hon Henry Hood also spoke.



Children cover their ears against the noise as the Honourable Artillery Company fires a 62-gun salute at the Tower of London yesterday to mark the 44th anniversary of the Queen's accession to the Throne

Statue of Maya king found

By NORMAN HAMMOND, ARCHAEOLOGY CORRESPONDENT

Dinners

Royal Pharmaceutical Society of Great Britain
Miss Ann Lewis, President of the Royal Pharmaceutical Society of Great Britain, was in the chair at a dinner held last night at 1 Lambeth Street, Professor Barrie Jay, Master of the Society of Apothecaries of London, also spoke.

Appointments

Mr Anthony Everett and Mr John Trotter have been appointed Deputy Lieutenants of Greater London.

AN IMPORTANT Maya sculpture commemorating the accession of an early king has been found at the site of Palenque in Mexico. A depiction of the king confronting a kneeling captive is accompanied by a hieroglyphic inscription.

The text names the king, Ah Kul Ah Nub, who reigned from AD 501 to 524, and confirms for the first time that he was the younger brother of the ruler, Sak-Chik, who reigned for 14 years from AD 487. They were the sons of a long-lived king, presently known only by the nickname "Casper", who came to the

throne at the age of 13 and remained there for 52 years. The new tablet, made from a creamy limestone and carved in low relief, was found in Temple 17, a structure believed to have been built nearly two centuries later, during Palenque's apogee under the ruler Chan-Bahlam. The Mexican archaeologist Arnoldo Gonzalez Cruz, who found the elaborate tomb of a royal woman at Palenque in 1994 (*The Times*, June 4, 1994), has published a photograph of the carving in the journal *Arqueologia Mexicana*.

The inscription gives a date in the Maya calendar equivalent to August 26, AD 490, before noting that Ah Kul "took the white headband" on his accession on May 6, 501. It also records that just before this, perhaps as part of a campaign to prove his fitness for the throne, he had captured a noble prisoner, presumably the youth who is shown kneeling before him.

The new inscription can be read, almost in its entirety, thanks to the rapid decipherment of Maya hieroglyphic writing in recent years. At least 13 kings of Palenque in a dynasty reigning from AD 437 to after 799 have now been documented.

University news

Oxford
All Souls College
To Post-Doctoral Research Fellowships (from October 1): Mr Faruq Noshir Dabhoiwala (Sheffield University), Dr Michael McQuillan (Universita Degli Studi di Roma).

Cambridge
Hughes Hall
Elected into a Fellowship in Class C with effect from January 1: Donald Ian McIntyre, Professor of Education.

Durham
The Hon Mrs Elsie To, the Newcastle-born elder, sister-in-law of Hong Kong, has been awarded the honorary degree of Doctor of Civil Law by the university. She was a student at Durham 60 years ago.

Stirling
Honorary degrees will be awarded to the following on February 24:
D Univ Ronald Stevenson, for his contribution to music and the arts; Graeme Gordon, for his contribution to aquaculture in Scotland; Rennie Mcowan, for his contribution to Scottish writing and culture.

MA
The Rev James Taylor, for his contribution to the university and the community.

Anniversaries

BIRTHS: St Thomas More, humanist and statesman, Chancellor 1535-32, London, 1478; Henry Fuseli, painter and writer, Zurich, 1741; Charles Dickens, novelist, Portsmouth, 1812; Sir William Huggins, astronomer, London, 1824; Sir James Murray, philologist, Devonport, 1837; Alfred Adler, psychiatrist, Vienna, 1870; Sinclair Lewis, novelist, Nobel laureate 1930, St Paul, Minnesota, 1895.

DEATHS: James Stewart, 2nd Earl of Moray, murdered at Donibristle, 1592; William Boyce, organist and composer, London, 1798; Ann Radcliffe, novelist, London, 1823; Henry Neale, poet, committed suicide in London, 1828; Joseph Sheridan LeFanu, novelist, Dublin, 1873; Adolphe Sax, inventor of the saxophone, Paris, 1894; Daniel Francois Maistre, Prime Minister of South Africa 1948-54, Stellenbosch, Cape Colony, 1859.

William Lloyd smashed the 1st-century Portland vase at the British Museum, 1845.
185 people died when HMS *Orpheus* was wrecked off the coast of New Zealand, 1863.
The main group of the Dead Sea Scrolls was discovered, 1947.
Grenada gained independence, 1974.

Service dinner

Royal Navy Club of 1765 and 1885
Mr Michael Pettit, Mr and Mrs John Stoker were the principal guests and speakers at a dinner of the Royal Navy Club of 1765 and 1885 held last night at the Naval and Military Club, Piccadilly, to entertain members of the Admiralty Board and mark the 100th anniversary of the club's founding. Vice-Admiral Sir David Dobson presided.

Legal appointment

Mr Paul Ronald Mildred to be a District Judge, assigned to the South Eastern/Midland and Oxford Circuits.

Forthcoming marriages

Mr J.A.M. Ashworth and Miss F.J. Harris
The engagement is announced between the son of Mrs A. Ashworth, of Princess Risborough, Buckinghamshire, and Fiona, daughter of Mr and Mrs E.W.P. Harris, of Studland, Dorset.

Mr G.J. Comber and Miss C.L. Bradshaw
The engagement is announced between Gavin, elder son of Mr and Mrs Terence H. Comber, of Little Baddow, Essex, and Caroline Louise, younger daughter of Major and Mrs Henry Bradshaw, of Great Hambois, Norfolk.

Mr P. Dixon and Miss R. Barcroft
The engagement is announced between Peter, son of Mr and Mrs R. Dixon, and Ruth, younger daughter of Mr Michael Barcroft and of Mrs Andrea Barcroft.

Mr S.J. Donald and Miss A.J. Dean
The engagement is announced between Stuart, elder son of Mr and Mrs D.L. Donald, of Reigate, Surrey, and Annabel, daughter of Mr and Mrs R.L. Dean, of Lusaka, Zambia.

Mr A.R. Elliot and Miss V.N. Lort-Phillips
The engagement is announced between Andrew, younger son of Mr and Mrs Robin Elliot, of Boar's Head, East Sussex, and Veneta, younger daughter of the late Mr Peregrine Lort-Phillips and of Mrs Carolyn Lort-Phillips, of Malmesbury, Wiltshire.

Mr S.E.D. Greave and Miss S.E. Williams
The engagement is announced between Stuart, son of Mr and Mrs Brian Greave, of Kirtlington, Oxfordshire, and Sarah, daughter of Mr and Mrs C.H. Williams, of Rickmansworth, Hertfordshire.

Mr A.G. Shives and Miss S.J. Lodge
The engagement is announced between Andrew, elder son of Dr and Mrs G. Shives, of Freetown, Sierra Leone, and Sara, only daughter of Mr and Mrs Nigel Lodge, of Thorpe End, Norfolk.

Marriage

Mr A.J. Taylor and Mrs C.H. Edgley
The marriage took place quietly on January 25, in Brackley, of Mr Andrew Taylor, son of Mr and Mrs Philip Taylor, of Chislehampton and Marlborough, to Mrs Caroline Edgley, daughter of Mr Richard Edgley, of Chislehampton, and Mrs Joy Edgley, of Swinkley.

Linnean Society of London

The Linnean Society of London has made the following awards:
The Linnean Medal for services to botany: Professor Jack Heslop-Harrison, Welsh Plant Breeding Station, Aberystwyth.
The Linnean Medal for services to zoology: Professor Keith Vickers-Rich, University of Cambridge.
The H.H. Blyden Award for an amateur naturalist who has made an important contribution to biological knowledge: John Henry Barret, Field Studies Council.
The Bicentenary Medal in recognition of work carried out by a biologist under 40: Dr Paul Hough, University of the Natural History Museum.
The J.W. Smeeth Prize for published botanical illustration: Bent Jørgensen, Copenhagen, Denmark.
The Irene Mathison Prize for the best thesis in botany: Dr Dorothy Steane, Oxford University.

BMDs: 0171 782 7272
PRIVATE: 0171 481 4000

PERSONAL COLUMN

TRADE: 0171 481 1982
FAX: 0171 481 9313

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Collateral attack on conviction

Smith v Linskill
Before Sir Thomas Bingham, Master of the Rolls, Lord Justice Peter Gibson and Lord Justice Schiemann

[Judgment February 5]
A claim brought by an intending plaintiff against his former solicitors, for alleged negligence in the preparation of his defence to a criminal charge of which he had been convicted, amounted to a collateral attack on the decision in the criminal proceedings.

Since he had been afforded a full opportunity to challenge the criminal charge within those proceedings, and since there was no fresh evidence of so compelling a nature as to require the court to alter the verdict, the general rule of public policy prevailed that such a claim was an abuse of the process of the court.

The Court of Appeal so held, dismissing an appeal by Christopher Smith from Mr Justice Potter (1995) 3 All ER 329, who determined, as a preliminary issue, that his claim could not proceed against the defendant, Julian Linskill, practising as Julian Linskill & Co, for damages for negligence and breach of contract in the preparation of his defence to the criminal charge of aggravated burglary.

Mr Smith had pleaded not guilty but had been convicted at Maidstone Crown Court in 1984 and sentenced to seven years imprisonment. His application for leave to appeal to the Court of Appeal, Criminal Division, had been refused on paper by the judge and on renewal before the full court.

Mr Andrew Nicol, QC and Mr Gavin Millar for Mr Smith; Mr Guy Mansfield, QC and Mr Andrew Sander for the defendant firm.

THE MASTER OF THE ROLLS, giving the judgment of the court, said that the leading modern authority on abuse of process in cases such as the present was *Hunter v Chief Constable of the West Midlands Police* (1982) AC 529, 541, where Lord Diplock had said down what had since been regarded as the governing rule on the subject.

That the abuse of process in such a case was the initiation of proceedings in a court of justice for the purpose of mounting a collateral attack on a final decision against the intending plaintiff which had been made by another court of competent jurisdiction in previous proceedings in which the intending plaintiff had had a full opportunity of contesting the decision in the court by which it had been made.

His Lordship said that Mr Smith had certainly initiated the

present proceedings and that his conviction in the crown court amounted to a final decision by a court of competent jurisdiction in previous proceedings against him.

The thrust of his case in the present proceedings was that if his criminal defence had been handled with proper care he would not, and should not have been convicted. Thus the soundness or otherwise of his conviction was an issue at the heart of the present proceedings.

Were he to recover substantial damages it could only be on the basis that he should not have been convicted. Even if he established negligence he could recover no more than nominal damages if the court were to conclude that, even if his case had been handled with proper care, he would still have been convicted.

It followed that the present proceedings did involve a collateral attack on the decision of the crown court.

It was not the intention of the House of Lords in *Hunter's* case to lay down an inflexible rule to be applied willy-nilly to all cases which might arguably be said to fall within it.

Lord Diplock had been at pains to emphasise the need for flexibility and the exercise of judgment: see *Walpole v Partridge & Wilson* (1994) QB 106, 116 per Lord Justice Ralph Gibson, that there were at least exceptions to the principle.

It was none the less noteworthy that in *McLennan v Chief Constable of the West Midlands* (1980) QB 283, 333 Lord Justice Goff, whose judgment was unreservedly approved by the House of Lords, expressed the opinion that to allow re-litigation of an issue which had previously been the subject of final decision "must prima facie be an abuse of the privilege of the court".

The court rejected Mr Nicol's argument that Mr Smith had not had a full opportunity of contesting the decision in the first court because the defendant's negligence had prevented him from deploying his full case.

The court considered that that argument was founded on a misunderstanding of what Lord Diplock had meant. It was plain from his speech in *Hunter* (at p542) that he was giving his ruling with reference to both civil and criminal cases.

It was evident in civil cases particularly that a party might lack any opportunity to resist a hostile claim, as where judgment was entered against him for procedural default, or might lack a full opportunity, as where summary judgment was given against him.

The court understood Lord Diplock to have been intending to preserve a party's right to make a

collateral attack on a decision made against him in such circumstances.

Having reviewed the opportunity afforded to Mr Smith in the handling of his defence and appeal, including the setting of grounds of appeal which drew attention to some at least of his complaints about his solicitors' handling of the case, the court concluded that, even if it were true that valid criticism could have been made, it was impossible to hold that he had lacked a full opportunity to contest the charge.

Were that the correct meaning of the rule, then the rule itself would be virtually meaningless, since it was hard to imagine a case where a convicted defendant could not find some plausible ground on which to criticise his solicitors' preparation of the defence.

The court also rejected Mr Nicol's submission, seeking to distinguish *Hunter's* case, that the present proceedings were not an abuse of process because it had not been found that Mr Smith's real purpose was to attack his conviction; his only and genuine purpose being to recover damages for professional negligence.

It was true that Lord Diplock had (at p541) attached considerable significance to the plaintiff's ulterior purpose in that case.

The court had no doubt but that the existence of such an ulterior purpose provided a strong and additional ground for holding proceedings to be an abuse.

But such an ulterior purpose was not, in its judgment, a necessary ingredient of abuse: see *Walpole's* case (at p120). The rule rested on public policy the basis of which was the undesirable effect of re-litigating issues such as the present.

The court could not see how those undesirable effects were mitigated by the motive of the intending plaintiff to recover damages rather than simply to establish the undesoundness of the earlier decision.

It was plain from *Hunter's* case (at p545), that the existence at the commencement of the civil action of fresh evidence obtained since the criminal trial might justify making an exception to the general rule.

It was also plain that the test to be met by such evidence was stricter than the ordinary Court of Appeal test: see *Ladd v Marshall* (1954) 1 WLR 1489, 1491. It had to be such as "entirely changes the aspect of the case": see *Phosphate Co Ltd v Molins* (1879) 4 App Cas 301, 314 and *Hunter v Chief Constable of West Midlands Police* (1982) AC 529, 545.

The court referred to evidence said by Mr Nicol to fall within that test and concluded that there was none which brought Mr Smith

within measurable distance of satisfying it.

The main considerations of public policy which underlay the existing rule were threefold:

1 The affront to any coherent system of justice which had necessarily to arise if there subsisted two final but inconsistent decisions of courts of competent jurisdiction.

Such would be the case here if there were subsisting decisions of the crown court, that Mr Smith was beyond reasonable doubt guilty of aggravated burglary and of the civil court, that if his defence had been properly prepared he would and should have been acquitted.

No reasonable observer could view that outcome with equanimity.

The court could not shut its eyes to the possibility that a criminal defendant might be wrongly convicted, perhaps because his defence had been ineptly prepared or conducted.

When that occurred there were two possible solutions: one, to relax the present restraint on seeking to establish the injustice by civil action; the second, which had been favoured over the past century, was to ensure that in appropriate cases the conviction could itself be reviewed, by giving a right of appeal; by providing a relatively low standard for the admission of fresh evidence on appeal; by empowering the appellate court to order a new trial; by giving the Home Secretary power to refer a case back to the Court of Appeal and by proposals to establish a new review body.

2 The virtual impossibility of fairly re-trying at a later date the issue before the court on the earlier occasion.

3 The importance of finality in litigation. The present rule had been seen by some as a rule invented by judges to protect their professional brethren.

It was of course true that no one welcomed a negligence claim against him, but the maxim "finis rei publicae ut finis sit litium" was not invoked by English judges, and nothing, on one view, could better serve the personal interests of the legal profession than endless re-litigation of the same issues. If it was suggested in *Black House*, "The one great principle of English law is, to make business for itself, there could be no better way of doing so."

But the view had long been taken that a final decision should, save in special circumstances, be final. Those broad considerations of public policy remained compelling. Even if it were open to the court to vary the general rule propounded in the *Hunter* case, it would not feel justified in doing so.

Solicitors: Strain Kerley & Co, Weightman Rutherford, Liverpool.

William Boyer (Transport Ltd v Secretary of State for the Environment and Another)
Before Lord Justice Stuart-Smith, Lord Justice Evans and Lord Justice Roch

[Judgment February 6]
The meaning of enforcement action "taken or purported to [have] taken" within the meaning of section 171B(4)(b) of the Town and Country Planning Act 1990, as inserted by section 4 of the Planning and Compensation Act 1991, within the previous five years had to be ascertained, or purported action, which itself was valid under the ten-year provisions in section 171B(3), or which was within the four-year extension after such a notice given by section 171B(4)(b).

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Planning enforcement action

William Boyer (Transport Ltd v Secretary of State for the Environment and Another)
Before Lord Justice Stuart-Smith, Lord Justice Evans and Lord Justice Roch

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Even if you believe passionately in a free press, you are not obliged to become a martyr to a journalist in pursuit of a story

Why did he do it? The question dogs *The House*, the much-praised series on the Royal Opera House with two weeks still to run on BBC2. How could Jeremy Isaacs, the general director and a man who knows a thing or two about television, let the candid cameras in to wander about, with results that could harm his reputation and the House's subsidy?

As an Isaacs fan, who believes that his contribution to British cultural life — the famed *World at War* series, the creation of Channel 4 — has been insufficiently rewarded (where is his knight-hood?), I'm sure the answer is a surfeit of fairness. If you believe in the public's right to know what goes on in public institutions, it seems only right to open the doors. Right, perhaps, but not essential. There is no duty, even for champions of the free press, to talk to the press — just as there is no need to pay more tax than you owe.

Social responsibility does not require martyrdom. Mr Isaacs could justifiably have refused the series on the same principle by which barristers never ask a witness a question to which they do not know the answer. The risk to those you represent is too great. Fly-on-the-wall documentaries, in particular, have given their programme-makers an opportunity to be brilliant at the subject's expense. Remember *The Family*?

In the end, Mr Isaacs's trust may be proved right. The Royal Opera House, as in last night's brilliant episode showing the parallel ballets of young dancers competing and trade unionists negotiating, emerges as a microcosm of British life. Many who never go near the place will end up loving it.

Anyone faced with a similar invitation, however, would do better to take the advice of that sage Californian, Nancy Reagan, and just say no.

To do so, though, is not without risk. As a journalist, I spend my days asking people, often strangers, to supply information for a work-in-progress which, they know, is unlikely to show them as they see themselves. I am continually grateful that they do answer my questions and return my calls. I am especially grateful to press officers in large organisations, who know that only a novice would stoop to the crude question, which no self-respecting journalist would answer: "What sort of line is your article going to take?"

But there is a lot of anti-press grievance about — well short of anything to merit the attention of



BRENDA MADDOX

the Press Complaints Commission, but which could be avoided with a few simple precautions. Don't ramble on and on, for example, and then complain that you have been quoted "out of context"; all quotes are out of context.

Anyone agreeing to give an interview should read what else

the interviewer has written. There are certain specialists in bitchiness against whom no one wins. Another good rule — Maevie Binchy, the Irish novelist, says Gore Vidal passed it on to her — "never let them interview you at home because they'll interview your house". The peddling point on the door, the unwashed cat-dish, the personal telephone call that arrives in the middle of the interview — all become fair game to the journalist invited over the threshold. Neutral territory, such as a restaurant, is safer but only if any mention of what is eaten or drunk is ruled out in advance. "She toyed with her *tripe à la mode de Caen*" as she reflected... is very vivid in journalism.

A lot of experts reel in shock from having their brains picked. They should learn to be on guard

against the telephone call that begins: "We're preparing a programme on astrobotany and wonder if you can spare a few minutes?" This is how a researcher extracts someone's lifetime knowledge without issuing an invitation to appear on the programme.

Shrewdly, the Committee for Public Understanding of Science (Copus), keeps a list of scientific experts prepared to talk quickly and clearly to the press. Other kinds of expert should consider such tactics as asking for a modest consultancy fee, offering to write an article themselves, or, at least, ask that the quotations to be attributed to them be read back. If the result is still infuriating, a letter to the editor or ombudsman is worth doing. Even if it does not get

printed, it will give the offender a bad quarter of an hour.

The ordinary citizen who picks up the telephone and finds the press on the line should take extreme care. Some tips. On no account be flattered. Find out to whom you are speaking. Don't answer more than you are asked. If you have something you really want in the press, ring the paper of your choice and ask who is covering the story. If you really don't want to talk, ask when the deadline is, and call back ten minutes before it. And don't say "off the record" halfway through, or worse, *slalom* in and out of confidentiality so that neither of you knows where you are.

Above all, remember you are furnishing meat for someone else's salami. There's no shame in not contributing. When you hear, as on Monday's *Newsnight*, "British Gas refused to comment on the FT's story", did you feel embarrassed for British Gas? Of course not. Silence is often the better part of PR.

Extracting the farce from political drama

Alexandra Frean on the Scott inquiry, coming to television screens soon

If the Government thought that television would confine its coverage of Sir Richard Scott's much-delayed report into the arms-to-Iraq affair, to long-winded news and current affairs programmes, it is going to be sorely disappointed.

Both the BBC and Channel 4 have turned the inquiry, which contained more dramatic and amusing one-liners than most sitcoms, into new forms of drama and comedy that bridge the worlds of current affairs and light entertainment.

Channel 4 has cleared its schedules late this Saturday evening to make way for a two-hour 15-minute satirical extravaganza of sketches and reconstructions of the most striking scenes from the inquiry. The programme, *Scott of the Arms Antics*, will be anchored by Sheena McDonald and will feature the satirist Rory Bremner and the investigative journalist Paul Foot.

Rory Bremner believes that broadcasters have to tread a fine line in mixing satire and current affairs. "There is a danger that it could become too facetious and smug. I don't want John Major to dismiss it as a lot of smart people distorting the truth that, after all, is what they have been doing," he says.

The way to avoid this, Mr Bremner says, is through thorough research — he spent 18 days wading through transcripts of the Scott inquiry — and careful, "light-touch" scripting.

A week later, on Sunday February 18, the BBC is to screen *Half the Picture*, a film reconstruction of the Scott inquiry starring Sylvia Syms as Baroness Thatcher and Michael Stroud as Sir Richard Scott. The film is based on the Theatre Theatre production of the play by the dramatist John McGrath and the journalist Richard Norton-Taylor.

For broadcasters, Scott is a



Jan Chappell, Sylvia Syms and Michael Stroud in *Half the Picture*, the BBC's reconstruction of the Scott inquiry

gift. Rarely has an opportunity presented itself to television to explore the "machinations of government in such a dramatic and entertaining way. What script writer would have dared to invent John Major's comment to the inquiry: "One of the charges, at the time, of course, was that in some way I must have known — because I had been the Chancellor, because I had been Foreign Secretary, because I had been Prime Minister — what was going on?"

When a civil servant was challenged by Sir Richard that a statement in a document was "junk", who could have invented the answer, "As a basic principle — but not necessarily total junk"?

As Mr McGrath, co-writer and producer of *Half the Picture*, says: "You couldn't make it up. And if you did, nobody would believe it."

David Lloyd, Channel 4's senior commissioning editor of news and current affairs, who commissioned Scott of the Arms Antics, believes that

the implications are so great that broadcasters have a duty to give it special treatment and invent new formats for it. "The event demands it. What we are trying to say is 'don't imagine that this is just about arms trading. It's also about the way government runs this country,'" he says.

Mr Lloyd hopes that the programme will reach beyond the core current affairs audience. "I want viewers to come away from it with an extremely clear idea about the issues behind it. Scott has been given an unparalleled opportunity to shine a light on the system and that will be his legacy," Mr Lloyd says.

Mr McGrath hopes that by packaging the entire Scott inquiry, which took 11 months, into a 90-minute film, "people will get the overall picture. It will show the contradictions that emerged over many days in the inquiry in a single picture," he adds.

He points out that as the television cameras were banned from the inquiry, it is difficult for most people to appreciate just how sensational much of it was.

George Faber, head of single drama at the BBC, who commissioned the film, agrees that it will make the complexities of the Scott Report more accessible to a wider audience.

Mr McGrath, who was the original director of the *2 Cuts* series, says that the inquiry was a dramatic event that could say some things serious but which would also entertain and would not just draw upon the natural tools of the current affairs department.

"We are planning to run something similar during the general election campaign."

You couldn't make it up. Nobody would believe it.

Alan Mitchell on the promotion worth \$400 million

The battle of the Pogs is upon us. Since the Pog was introduced into Britain last year, this latest playground craze has swept the country, captivating five to 11-year-olds, boys and girls alike. Now these little nubby-wink-like tokens have become the subject of a marketing war between Britain's snack companies. And if safety campaigners have their way, they could also trigger new legislation.

The Pog craze took off when a Hawaiian drinks company revived an old Hawaiian game as a promotion for its Passion Fruit, Orange and Guava (POG) drink. It put colourful designs on its bottle tops so that kids could collect them. The kids went crazy.

The American games entrepreneur Doug McFadden (other hits: Trivial Pursuit, Pictionary) and friends liked the promotion so much they bought the company. Now they are turning it into a global brand. Mr McFadden is in London this week to sign up a major drinks company to sell Pog drink across Europe.

The success secret behind the game of Pog, he says, is its old-fashioned simplicity. "They're like marbles. Kids can stuff them in their pocket, collect and trade them, and they can afford them [in the UK they cost 99p for six]. Parents love Pogs because they get the children away from the computer screen and playing together instead."

Like marbles, they're won and lost in playground competitions, says Barry Walker, chairman of the British Association of Toy Retailers, which last week named Pogs the toy of the year.

Both hope that their respective dramatic treatments of the Scott inquiry and report will set a precedent for them to mix politically and publicly sensitive current affairs events with drama and entertainment in future.

The BBC is already preparing dramatisations of the Nick Leeson story, of the search for the killers of Julie Ward and of the Gulf War.

Mr Lloyd says that Channel 4 has been searching for years for a model of programme that could say some things serious but which would also entertain and would not just draw upon the natural tools of the current affairs department.

"We are planning to run something similar during the general election campaign."

It's crunch time in the war of the Pogs

or countries and, in its experience, at that level of Pogs per capita the craze really takes off," declares its UK marketing vice-president, Martin Glenn.

While the original Pog is cardboard, Tazos are plastic. Tazos also have a notch in them that allows children to stick them together. "We have a point of difference. Ours are buildable," boasts Mr Glenn.

"We are offering the genuine article," replies Nigel Parrott, marketing manager of Golden Wonder, which paid Waddington's, the owners of the UK licence, for the privilege.

Earlier this year United Biscuits subsidiary KP withdrew 12 million packets of Skips after consumers complained that the Pog-like "milk caps" it had used in a promotion could be swallowed. Now, in the wake of reports that a Belgian woman choked to death on a crisp-packet Pog, safety campaigners are calling for the promotions to be halted.

"If Pogs are small enough to be put in the mouths of children they are dangerous. It's an unnecessary hazard," says James Tye, director-general of the British Safety Council.

All three major crisp-manufacturers, Walkers, KP, and Golden Wonder, have launched, or are about to launch, Pog-related promotions. Together, they'll push the UK's Pog population up to around half a billion, or ten for every man, woman and child.

Starting in a few weeks, Golden Wonder will be distributing 45 million Pogs in its crisp packets. Not to be outdone, Walkers will begin placing 250 million Tazos (its own version of Pogs) in packets of Walkers Crisps, Doritos, Quavers and Monster Munch. This represents a magic figure of 25 for every person under the age of 15.

"Walkers' parent company PepsiCo Foods International has had staggering success with Tazos promotions in other

The council has been campaigning against similar promotions in cereal packets for the last 30 years, and this week Mr Tye called for legislation to prevent future Pog-style in-pack promotions. Both Walkers and Golden Wonder insist that their brightly coloured Pogs, which are separately wrapped in plastic, are safe.

Indeed, their safeguards go beyond what the law requires. "We have passed all the choke tests," says Mr Glenn. In Holland, where a similar promotion is well under way, there have not been any reports of problems, he adds.

Meanwhile, there is big money to be made out of little Pogs. Last year Waddington's sold more than 100 million of the cardboard discs while the brand's owners, the World Pog Federation, totted up global sales of \$400 million. Golden Wonder is spending £3.5 million on its promotion, including TV advertising. It is hoping for a 20 per cent sales boost.

Walkers still expects its Tazos promotion to generate huge sales increases. PepsiCo Food International decided to "go global" with Tazos promotions after initial tests produced sales increases of 50 per cent and more.

In Holland, more Tazos collectors' albums have been purchased than the country has children. If Walkers achieves half of that sort of uptake here, it will be close to overtaking Coca-Cola to become the country's biggest supermarket brand.



Crisp-makers say Pogs like this one will boost sales

BBC drama gains on ITV

THE BBC's quest to boost its drama ratings and compete effectively with ITV in this field is showing promising signs of paying off. The corporation occupies ten of the top 20 drama programmes in our ratings chart this week.

The epic series *Our*

Friends in the North shot straight to the top of the BBC2 ratings chart with 5.1 million viewers. The question now is whether it can maintain this audience for all nine episodes.

The BBC's latest detective series, *Hetty Wainthropp Investigates*, is also scoring

well with more than ten million viewers.

The BBC cannot afford to be complacent, however. ITV is soon to air a raft of strong popular drama series which regularly top the ten million mark. These include *Kavanagh QC*, *Peak Practice* and *Band of Gold 2*.

JANUARY 15 TO 21, 1996									
Programme	Date	Time	Channel	Producer	Genre	Audience (m)	Series	Rank	Notes
A Touch of Frost	Sun 21	20:01	ITV	Yorkshire	Drama	17.5	Series	18.4	
Calderdale	Sat 20	20:07	BBC1	BBC	Drama	12.5	Series	12.5	
Catherine Cookson's Tide of Life	Fri 18	21:02	ITV	Scottish	Drama	11.4	Series	11.4	
Top Gear	Wed 17	21:25	BBC1	BBC	Comedy	8.8	Series	8.8	
Holly Wainthropp Investigates	Sun 21	19:30	BBC1	Wainthropp	Drama	8.8	Series	8.8	
File in the Sky	Tue 16	22:00	BBC1	Ten Thirteen/20th Cent Fox	Drama	8.8	Series	8.8	
Call Red	Mon 15	21:01	ITV	Anglia	Drama	7.8	Series	7.8	
The Vet	Thu 18	20:00	BBC1	Rome Films	Drama	7.3	Series	7.3	
Mind to Murder	Sat 20	21:15	ITV	Tower 12/Beynash	Drama	6.1	Series	6.1	
Men and Women	Sun 21	21:07	BBC1	BBC	Drama	6.1	Series	6.1	
Our Friends in the North	Mon 15	21:02	BBC2	BBC	Drama	5.1	Series	5.1	
The Demon Headmaster	Sun 21	17:11	BBC1	BBC	Drama	4.8	Series	4.8	
Sea Hearts in Galveston	Mon 15	22:43	ITV	Gemsdale	Drama	4.1	Series	4.1	
Band of Gold	Sat 20	17:52	BBC2	Paramount	Drama	3.9	Series	3.9	
Aut Widescreen, Pet	Wed 17	22:02	ITV	Constant G/Amblin	Drama	3.7	Series	3.7	
ER	Thu 18	16:20	ITV	Tetra	Drama	3.0	Series	3.0	
Mike and Angelo									

High-spending editors have so far failed to stop the Express fall, says Brian MacArthur

Mail shrugs off rival challenge

Fleet Street offers many spectacular sports — *The Sun* v *The Daily Mirror*, *The Guardian* v *The Independent*, the editorship of *The Observer* — but none is more engaging than the epic battle between the resurgent Mail group and the steadily sinking Express group.

So there was huge excitement to be had from the *Daily Mail* on Monday when it trumped its sales had risen above two million. For Paul Dacre, Editor of the *Daily Mail* since 1992 after the 28-year reign of Sir David English, now chairman of Associated Newspapers and Editor-in-Chief, the announcement will have offered several reasons for relief. In an era when sales of national newspapers have been falling, to sell more than two million copies a day — up 250,000 copies on a year ago and for the first time for 28 years — is a huge achievement in itself, albeit with help from a

scratchcard promotion and the death of *Today*. It meant, too, that under Dacre the *Daily Mail* had achieved a significantly higher sale than was ever recorded during the editorship of the legendary English.

A greater reason for relief, however, was that sales of the *Daily Mail* went up in January as those of its rival, the *Daily Express*, went down. In what many see as a final attempt by Lord Stevens of Ludgate, chairman of Express Newspapers, to revive the flagging sales of his two flagship national titles, new editors were appointed in December to the *Daily Express* and *Sunday Express*.

Both Richard Addis and Sue Douglas got their main experience on the *Daily Mail*. With the promise of millions of pounds of investment, they have hired and fired with abandon. Addis, who went to the *Daily Express*, instantly recruited five of Dacre's most



The mid-market tabloids are involved in an epic struggle



The mid-market tabloids are involved in an epic struggle

senior lieutenants as well as a clutch of his star writers, some of whom turned down offers of even more money to stay.

At the *Sunday Express*, Douglas recruited eight journalists, having approached 40, from the *Sunday Times*, where she had been deputy editor. She has recruited Julie Burchill from the *Sunday Times* as a columnist and

moved the paper upmarket. Neither Addis nor Douglas will get sympathy from the cut-throat world of Fleet Street, but both deserve it: simply to arrest four decades of declining sales would be an achievement.

Yet in January, when sales start rising after the Christmas dip, sales of both their papers fell again. When the

monthly Audit Bureau of Circulation report is published on Friday it is expected to show that the *Daily Mail* increased by 79,000 last month against a loss by the *Daily Express* of about 19,000.

Meanwhile, the *Sunday Express* shed 43,000 sales, as *The Mail on Sunday* boosted its circulation by more than 100,000 to over 2.1 million — and for the first time in history *The Sunday Times*, at about 1,295,000, sold more than the *Sunday Express*.

The sales figures will put both editors under renewed pressure to show results for the money they have spent — some writers are now on more than £100,000 a year. They need the investment they have been promised in the sort of reader promotions at which the *Mail* group excels. That investment needs to be continuous rather than spasmodic — a new *Express* scratchcard game last month failed to lift sales.

NEWS

Lords win TV sport battle

Broadcasting of top sporting events on BBC and ITV was guaranteed last night after the Lords defeated the Government, preventing them going exclusively to satellite television. A cross-party alliance of peers secured a 117-vote victory to ensure general broadcasting of eight events — cricket Test matches; the Derby; the Grand National; the Football World Cup final; the FA Cup final; the Scottish FA Cup final; Wimbledon finals; and the Olympics. Pages 1, 10, 27

Sid told to cash in his shares

Sid, the archetypal small shareholder eagerly pursued when British Gas was privatised, is being told that he is not wanted now that the company is to be split up. Such investors are to be encouraged to cash in their shares to avoid British Gas Energy having a register of 1.8 million names. Pages 1, 25, 27, 29

Snow chaos

Much of Britain was paralysed by some of the heaviest snowfalls for 50 years with motorists stranded for a second night in their cars and hundreds of schools shut. Page 1, 3

Swimmer breaks legs

The Olympic dreams of Alex Bennett, 18, one of Britain's brightest young swimmers, have been shattered by a head-on car crash in which she broke both legs on her way to training. Page 1

Clarke warning

Slashing the welfare budget overnight could lead to riots in the streets, Kenneth Clarke told the Tory Right as he mapped out a gradual path to reducing state spending. Pages 2, 10

School tests

Gillian Shephard is asking her curriculum advisers to consider tests for nine-year-olds to counter alarm about primary school standards. Pages 4, 18

Collins in court

Joan Collins swept into a New York Court "to speak for many authors" in a dispute with the publisher who rejected her novel as "implausible". Page 5

Asthma campaign

More than 1,000 people are dying from asthma in Britain each year because doctors prescribe the wrong drugs, experts said at the launch of a campaign. Page 6

Lada convoy heads home to Ukraine

Five Ukrainian sailors stranded on Tyneside for ten months are setting off for home in three battered Ladas. They are the remaining crew of the tall ship *Tovarisch*, marooned since last April, when safety experts said it would cost £2 million to make her seaworthy. Local people have been feeding and clothing them. The captain is staying with his ship. Page 4

Destitute doctor

An American doctor whose new British employers paid for his rotweiler and pick-up truck to be brought from Missouri said they were all he had left after a divorce settlement. Page 7

Murder memories

Elsie Wilson, 67, a Yorkshire farmer's wife, is preparing for the anniversary of the motiveless murder of her twin sister Margaret. Police say the killing remains an enigma. Page 9

Indian prohibition

The north Indian state of Haryana has announced that all rural liquor stores must close permanently by April 1 in another attempt to control the nation's thirst for alcohol. Page 11

White House race

As Louisiana Republicans prepared to cast the first votes of the 1996 presidential election the enormous cost of Steve Forbes's bid was revealed. Page 12

Cézanne fever

Philippe Paul Cézanne was feted as he arrived for the exhibition of his great-grandfather's work. The Tate has been swamped by ticket applications. Page 13

Serbs questioned

War crimes investigators from The Hague questioned three senior Serb military officers seized by the Bosnian Government in Sarajevo last week. Page 14



Virginia Bottomley, the Heritage Secretary, addressing the inaugural meeting of the Westminster Media Forum in London

BUSINESS

Coal failure: Almost 1,500 mining jobs are at risk after a rescue attempt broke down and administrators were appointed at Coal Investments. Page 25

Manufacturing fell: December's unexpected slump in manufacturing activity led to the weakest quarterly performance since early 1992 and increased speculation about base rates falling further. Page 25

Jaguar: The car company has been forced to lay off more than 2,000 workers for a week. Page 26

Markets: The FT-SE 100 index ended 0.9 points higher at 3,747.5, with 871.7 million shares traded. The pound rose 0.78 cents to \$1.5405 and 1.38 pence to DM2.2664, lifting the sterling index to 84.3 from 83.7. Page 28

SPORT

Cricket: The chairman and chief executive of the International Cricket Council are to intercede in the dispute over matches scheduled for Colombo which threatens the World Cup. Page 48

Football: Roger Stanislaus was sacked by Leyton Orient after testing positive for cocaine after a match at Barnet last November. Stanislaus was already suspended for a year by the FA. Page 48

Rugby union: France, who were unexpectedly beaten by Scotland last weekend, have dropped four players for their next match in the five nations' championship, against Ireland. Page 43

Athletics: Dionicio Ceron will attempt a hat-trick in the London Marathon on April 21. Page 43

ENTERTAINMENT

Merseybeat memories: A new musical, *Ferry Cross the Mersey*, is part of Liverpool's growth industry, marketing its pop past. Alan Jackson on the city that sells John Lennon Meringue Pie. Page 39

Post-apartheid: At the Royal Court, the playwright Athol Fugard offers a deep and subtle message for the new South Africa in *Valley Song*. Page 39

Young at Art: Schoolchildren are learning to write songs like Berg rather than Blur, thanks to a Wignmore Hall songwriting project in four schools. Page 40

Music man: Mark Elder is back at English National Opera, the place where he made his name as an opera conductor. But does Covent Garden beckon? Page 41

OPINION

Muesel and Montessori are two of the essentials discovered by the middle classes, a social stratum which needs defending. Page 17

Great Scott: Television has found that the Scott inquiry has more onliners than most sit-coms. Page 23

Riverside rises: Property prices in London's Docklands remain below their 1988 peak but they are 20 per cent up on 1992. Page 33

Trendy toddlers: Children like to look cool and be comfortable, says Iain R. Webb, as three mothers photograph their offspring in this spring's look. Page 16

Pay ups and downs: Our annual survey of who earns what on the salary ladder. Page 36

The United States would have no choice but to help Taiwan to defend itself against attack by Communists, China. No treaty or law compels this response, but decency and strategic interest demand it. However, there is an overwhelming national need to prevent today's friction becoming tomorrow's explosion. *The Washington Post*

Brigadier Donald Nott: The Right Rev Vernon Nicholls, Bishop of Sodor and Man, 1974-83. Sir Archibald Ross. Page 21

Kohl's European "convoy", pop composers, Burattini: electoral reform. Page 11



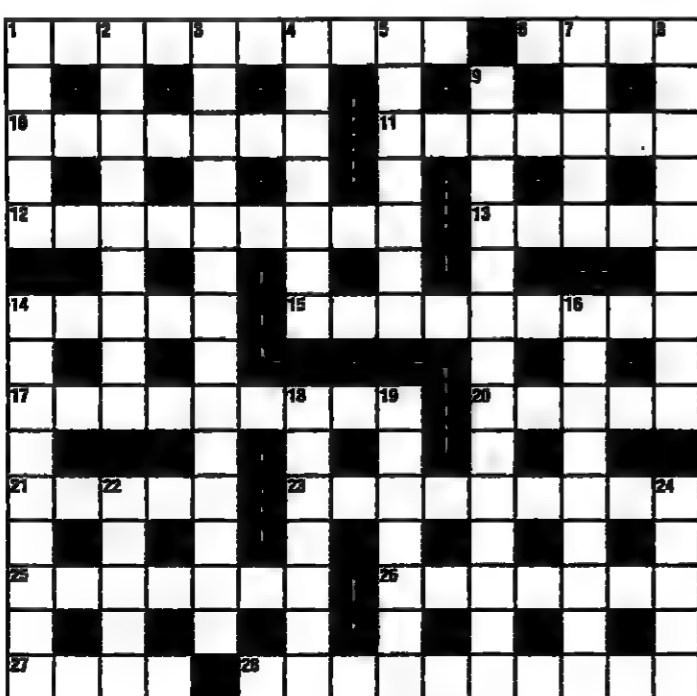
TOMORROW

IN THE TIMES

FILMS
Cops and dealers: Spike Lee travels mean streets again in *Clockers*

BOOKS
Anthony Storr on why the poet Michael Ryan is addicted to sex

THE TIMES CROSSWORD NO 20,084



- ACROSS
- Representative character from book of James (10).
 - Young group's state (4).
 - Valour in the thick of battle, hiding sign of pain (7).
 - Conclusive move on board to restrain ship's officer (9).
 - Brought up near a city in Europe (5).
 - More sensible to use old-fashioned way, right? (5).
 - Submitted to trial, provided one gets caught and witnessed (9).
 - Views, say, with headlands (9).
 - Nomad wants animal back before end of this year (5).
 - Take place of commander, calling up reserves initially (5).
 - Detected doing something wrong, and arrested abroad (6,3).
 - Drink more rum, number one (7).
- DOWN
- An aromatic flavouring mostly used in meat jelly (5).
 - Bleat about street needing repair in part of London (9).
 - Variety of cranks pose 'ere? Right (8,6).
 - Do some drawing in pamphlet, at first (7).
 - Weigh down with work and urgency of business (7).
 - Present expression of sympathy (5).
 - Careful management from partner reduced transport business (9).
 - One who's sceptical, but changes during performance with poet (8,6).
 - Part of US is seen in western with criminals in (9).
 - Make do and mend around island (9).
 - Instrument little used in Italy (7).
 - 19th son selected, took part in boat race (7).
 - Manager who works at stock exchange? (5).
 - Two chaps briefly recorded the minutes, say (5).

Solution to Puzzle No 20,083

DOUBLE OR QUITS
SEM UOYU
ABUNDANCE TENON
BIRAD
MAYOR BRIGGORE
A HUECOR
NARROWS SPONGES
SESTUT
HAPLESS WOOLERA
ALNMAUT
NEED PURR ROUGE
NDGPINM
LATTY GRAPEVINE
SELTSON
HORSECHESNUT

WEATHER

For the latest region by region forecast, 24 hours a day, dial 0800 900 followed by the appropriate code.

Greater London	701
East of England	702
West of England	703
South of England	704
North of England	705
Scotland	706
Wales	707
London & SE England	708
East of England	709
West of England	710
South of England	711
North of England	712
Scotland	713
Wales	714
London & SE England	715
East of England	716
West of England	717
South of England	718
North of England	719
Scotland	720
Wales	721
London & SE England	722
East of England	723
West of England	724
South of England	725
North of England	726
Scotland	727
Wales	728
London & SE England	729
East of England	730
West of England	731
South of England	732
North of England	733
Scotland	734
Wales	735

AA ROADWATCH

For the latest AA traffic roadwatch information 24 hours a day, dial 2225 401 followed by the appropriate code.

London & SE traffic, motorway	731
Area within M25	732
East of England, A1, A10, A103	733
West of England, A1, A10, A103	734
South of England, A1, A10, A103	735
North of England, A1, A10, A103	736
Scotland, A1, A10, A103	737
Wales, A1, A10, A103	738
London & SE traffic, non-motorway	739
Area within M25	740
East of England, A1, A10, A103	741
West of England, A1, A10, A103	742
South of England, A1, A10, A103	743
North of England, A1, A10, A103	744
Scotland, A1, A10, A103	745
Wales, A1, A10, A103	746
London & SE traffic, non-motorway	747
Area within M25	748
East of England, A1, A10, A103	749
West of England, A1, A10, A103	750
South of England, A1, A10, A103	751
North of England, A1, A10, A103	752
Scotland, A1, A10, A103	753
Wales, A1, A10, A103	754

HIGHEST & LOWEST

Yesterday's highest day temp. (°C) and lowest night temp. (°C) for the 24 hours ending 6pm. Forecast for today's high and low temps. (°C) and wind speed (mph) and direction.

FORECAST

General: England and Wales will be generally cloudy, with light outbreaks of rain along the east coast and in northeast England. Rain, sleet and snow will spread into the southwest during the morning and across southern counties in the afternoon.

Scotland and Northern Ireland will also be cloudy, with Northern Ireland and western Scotland seeing the best of any brightness. The rest of Scotland will have further outbreaks of rain, sleet and snow spreading into Northern Ireland later in the afternoon.

London, SE England, E Anglia, E Midlands, W Midlands, N Wales: cloudy. Rain, sleet and snow from late afternoon. Cold. Wind light southeasterly, becoming moderate to fresh. Max 12 (34°F).

Central S England, Channel Isles, SW England, S Wales: cloudy.

AROUND BRITAIN YESTERDAY

24 hrs to 5 pm: b = bright; c = cloudy; d = drizzle; ds = dust storm; du = dust; f = fog; g = gale; h = hail; l = light; m = mist; o = overcast; r = rain; s = sun; t = thunder; w = wind; x = not available due to transmission breakdown.

Area	Sun	Rain	C	F	M	W	X
North	0.1	0.1	0.1	0.1	0.1	0.1	0.1
East	0.1	0.1	0.1	0.1	0.1	0.1	0.1
West	0.1	0.1	0.1	0.1	0.1	0.1	0.1
South	0.1	0.1	0.1	0.1	0.1	0.1	0.1
London	0.1	0.1	0.1	0.1	0.1	0.1	0.1
Scotland	0.1	0.1	0.1	0.1	0.1	0.1	0.1
Wales	0.1	0.1	0.1	0.1	0.1	0.1	0.1
Channel	0.1	0.1	0.1	0.1	0.1	0.1	0.1
Islands	0.1	0.1	0.1	0.1	0.1	0.1	0.1

ASIA

Area	Temp	Wind	Cloud	Temp	Wind	Cloud
London	15	10	10	15	10	10
Paris	15	10	10	15	10	10
Rome	15	10	10	15	10	10
Moscow	15	10	10	15	10	10
Beijing	15	10	10	15	10	10
Tokyo	15	10	10	15	10	10
Sydney	15	10	10	15	10	10
Melbourne	15	10	10	15	10	10
Auckland	15	10	10	15	10	10
Wellington	15	10	10	15	10	10

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Area	Sun	Rain	C	F	M	W	X
North	0.1	0.1	0.1	0.1	0.1	0.1	0.1
East	0.1	0.1	0.1	0.1	0.1	0.1	0.1
West	0.1	0.1	0.1	0.1	0.1	0.1	0.1
South	0.1	0.1	0.1	0.1	0.1	0.1	0.1
London	0.1	0.1	0.1	0.1	0.1	0.1	0.1
Scotland	0.1	0.1	0.1	0.1	0.1	0.1	0.1
Wales	0.1	0.1	0.1	0.1	0.1	0.1	0.1
Channel	0.1	0.1	0.1	0.1	0.1	0.1	0.1
Islands	0.1	0.1	0.1	0.1	0.1	0.1	0.1

ASIA

Area	Temp	Wind	Cloud	Temp	Wind	Cloud
London	15	10	10	15	10	10
Paris	15	10	10	15	10	10
Rome	15	10	10	15	10	10
Moscow	15	10	10	15	10	10
Beijing	15	10	10	15	10	10
Tokyo	15	10	10	15	10	10
Sydney	15	10	10	15	10	10
Melbourne	15	10	10	15	10	10
Auckland	15	10	10	15	10	10
Wellington	15	10	10	15	10	10

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Mark Elder: happy to be back on the podium at ENO



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Families are moving back into Docklands



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France ring in changes for Ireland game

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Pages 46, 47

THE TIMES

BUSINESS EDITOR Lindsay Cook

WEDNESDAY FEBRUARY 7 1996

Restructuring prompted by loss of supply monopoly and massive liabilities

British Gas sets 1997 target for demerger

By Ross TITMAN AND ERIC REGULY

BRITISH GAS yesterday unveiled the most radical restructuring in British corporate history, detailing plans to give 18 million investors free shares in a demerged gas supply business.

The company is to float its gas supply business, together with Britain's biggest gasfields and its £40 billion of loss-making, take-or-pay contracts. The move aims to free the utility from the uncertainties and liabilities arising from its monopoly over the supply of gas to households and smaller businesses.

The demerged British Gas Energy, as it has been provisionally named, will have 22,000 employees, annual sales of £8 billion and net assets of £2.6 billion. It will also include British Gas Service, the loss-making contract appliance maintenance arm.

Stripped of its gas supply business, the remaining British Gas company, provisionally named TransCo International, will have at its core ownership of Britain's £18 billion gas pipeline system. Operating under a price cap

set by Ofgas, the gas regulator, this business will earn profits of around £700 million a year from fees paid by shippers, including British Gas Energy.

TransCo International will also include British Gas's overseas exploration, production, and distribution activities in Latin America, Asia and Eastern Europe, and its gas-burning power stations in Britain and overseas.

Cedric Brown, the 61-year-old chief executive of British Gas, is to retire at the company's annual meeting in April. But final proposals for the demerger, requiring approval by investors controlling 51 per cent of the shares, will not be tabled until the April 1997 meeting.

However, Ian Lang, President of the Board of Trade, has approved changes in British Gas's licence that will enable it to transfer assets into the new supply business. Executives to head the new businesses and oversee the integration will be named in early summer.

Richard Giordano, chairman of British Gas, said TransCo International will be

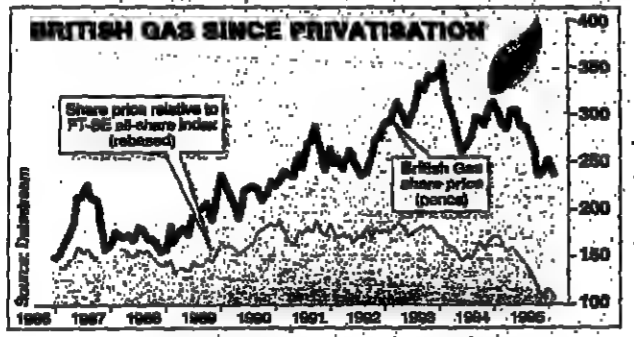
a capital-intensive, long-term business operating in world markets, generating a steady stream of dividends. By contrast British Gas Energy "will seek to return funds to shareholders by way of dividends or share repurchases when it judges that circumstances make it appropriate to do so".

BGE will be loaded with £40-billion of take-or-pay contracts, with liabilities estimated at £1.5 billion. To balance these, British Gas has allotted the company its prized North and South Morecambe gasfields, capable of supplying 15 per cent of Britain's peak gas needs.

The first task of the new management will be to renegotiate gas-purchase contracts with 40 leading North Sea producers, at a time when spot prices are around half the level of British Gas's average 20p a therm contract price.

TransCo will end up with most of British Gas's debt, which at the end of the last financial year was £2.3 billion and has since risen by several hundred million. It will have assets of about £2.1 billion against the £2.6 billion in assets that will be held by British Gas Energy.

The splitting of British Gas will cost £50 million over the next 14 months in advisory and other fees (Patricia Tehan writes). British Gas has been working on its demerger plans for several months and costs have already begun to add up.



Brown goes, page 1
Pennington, page 27
Dinosaur monopoly, page 29
City diary, page 29



Brown study: the retiring Gas chief yesterday. Richard Giordano is in the background

Investors divided over break-up

By PATRICIA TEHAN

BRITISH GAS'S demerger plans brought starkly contrasting reactions from its shareholders. The most hostile came from the Pensions Investment Research Consultants (Pirc), which advises institutional shareholders on investments.

Anne Simpson, a Pirc director, said splitting British Gas into two businesses would not make the contract problem go away. Shareholders would still "own" the problem in the form of shares in the new company.

She said Cedric Brown was the fourth executive to receive increased salaries under British Gas's new pay policy and subsequently announce his retirement from the board. She urged British Gas to seek shareholder approval of its remuneration policy.

However, British Gas's bigger institutional investors were broadly in favour of the plans and expressed sympathy with Mr Brown. One said his firm had been irritated with British Gas's lack of openness about the contracts problem, but had sympathy with the view that when they had been signed the company was in a monopoly position. The demerger appeared to make sense as the company was essentially two different businesses. However, he said, "our view is that BGE will struggle".

Sir Anthony Beaumont-Dark, the former Conservative MP who chairs the TR High Income Trust which has £700,000 of British Gas shares, called for Mr Giordano to stand aside. He said his fund would vote against Mr Giordano taking on the chief executive's role, when Mr Brown retires. "I hope other institutions will follow our lead," he said. However, his fund would back demerger, as the best solution to British Gas's problems, he said.

BUSINESS TODAY

STOCK MARKET INDICES			
FT-SE 100	3747.5	(+0.5)	
Yield	3.85%		
FT-SE All share	1830.81	(+0.67)	
Nikkei	20761.18	(+97.77)	
New York	5433.34	(+25.65)	
Dow Jones	6433.24	(+2.04)	
S&P Composite	643.47	(+2.04)	

US RATE			
Federal Funds	5 1/4%	(F=1%)	
Long Bond	110 1/8%	(105 1/8%)	
Yield	6.13%	(6.16%)	

LONDON MONEY			
3-month Interbank	6 1/4%	(F=1%)	
Life long bill	108 1/2%	(108 1/2%)	

STERLING			
New York	1.5400*	(1.5385)	
London	1.5411	(1.5381)	
DM	2.2553	(2.2565)	
FF	7.7970	(7.7420)	
Yen	1.6254	(1.6243)	
S index	162.67	(161.18)	
£ index	84.3	(83.7)	

DOLLAR			
London	1.4731*	(1.4675)	
DM	5.0622*	(5.0415)	
FF	1.2029*	(1.1978)	
Yen	106.53*	(105.20)	
S index	95.7	(95.6)	

Tokyo close Yen 106.30

NORTH SEA OIL			
Brent 15-day (Apr)	£18.08	(£18.00)	

GOLD			
London close	\$410.58	(\$414.75)	

* denotes midday trading price

Lloyd's profit
Lloyds of London is set to unveil a £1 billion profit, its first since 1987. The profit, relating to the year 1993, will partly offset the £9 billion losses of the last five years. Page 26

Jaguar layoffs
Jaguar has been forced to send home a third of its workforce after being hit by stagnant sales in the UK and overseas. Some 2,200 workers will be paid lay-off wages for a week. The plans caught the industry by surprise. Jaguar sales had jumped 30 per cent last year. Page 26

Long journey from fitter to chief executive's chair

By MARIANNE CURPHY

IN SPITE OF his many achievements, the name of Cedric Brown will always be associated with a 30-stone pig that buried his snout in a bucket labelled Share Options outside a British Gas shareholders' meeting last summer.

Cedric the pig was brought along to the annual meeting by a band of small shareholders furious at what they claimed were the excessive pay and perks of BGE's top directors. Their protest set the tone for one of the stormiest AGMs the City has seen. More than 4,500 small shareholders attended to vote against the reappointment of four directors, but proxy votes from institutional investors holding 97 per cent of the votes won the day.

The bluff Yorkshireman who rose from gas fitter to BGE chief executive over 44 years, put the episode down to "part of

life's rich experience". Colleagues say it was his combination of an iron will and a driving ambition that kept him going that day. Mr Brown says his time as an engineer taught him to solve problems through practical measures, although his critics portray him as a man steeped in the utility culture with little experience of the outside world.

He left school at 16 to become a laboratory assistant with the East Midlands Gas Board. Then, 22 years later, he became East Midlands director of engineering and was thrust on to the management fast track. A head office post came three years later, and in 1980 he was put in charge of BGE's first big offshore development, the Morecambe Bay gas field.

He was made chief executive in 1992. In November 1994, he gained £205,000 rise, bringing his salary to £475,000.

A survivor with no intention of bowing out of the fray

By ERIC REGULY AND ALASDAIR MURRAY

RICHARD GIORDANO, the former New York lawyer who became non-executive chairman of British Gas two years ago, has emerged as a survivor in the company's restructuring. Mr Giordano will replace Cedric Brown, initially as chief executive. His basic salary of £450,000, however, will not be increased.

Mr Giordano, who was chief executive of BOC Group before joining British Gas, was supposed to have worked only three days a week.

Instead, he found that defending Mr Brown's salary and overseeing a company under severe competitive threat were full-time jobs. He will have ultimate responsibility for the success of British Gas's split into two

separately listed companies.

Mr Giordano has no intention of leaving when the demerger is finished in the spring of 1997. He wants to become non-executive chairman of both BGE and Transco.

Relations between Mr Giordano and the seven non-executive directors, who are charged with ensuring that shareholders' rights are protected during the demerger process, are said to have deteriorated during the past year.

There is a good chance that Philip Rogerson, 51, an executive director, whose portfolio includes the pipeline and overseas development divisions, will become chief executive of TransCo. Roy Gardner, who succeeded Mr Rogerson as finance director in 1994, is thought to be gunning for the chief executive's position at BGE.

CI put into administration

By PHILIP BASSETT INDUSTRIAL EDITOR

COAL privatisation claimed its first casualty yesterday when Coal Investments, the UK's second-largest mining group, was placed in administration after the breakdown of a rescue attempt.

Administrators said they planned to carry on trading, while they considered options.

CI, set up by Malcolm Edwards, the former British Coal marketing director, three years ago, applied yesterday to the High Court for an order under the 1986 Insolvency Act after lengthy talks with the company's three bankers.

The company said administrators had been brought in after its banks failed to agree on an attempt to raise new cash. The company said that Union Bank of Switzerland had asked for administrators to be appointed after differing with NatWest and Banque Indosuez over a plan to extend debt facilities.

CI, which has also been



Edwards set up company

trying to raise cash in the City, had used up its £30 million borrowing facility and was looking for another £5 million to help it to increase capacity.

National Power, the electricity generator, confirmed that it had been involved in talks over a possible rescue deal for the company.

The court appointed three partners from Arthur Andersen, the accountant, as joint administrators. They held

Factory output fall worst since 1992

By JANET BUSH, ECONOMICS CORRESPONDENT

MANUFACTURING activity slumped unexpectedly badly in December, leading to the weakest quarterly performance since early 1992 and making the City even more certain that base rates will fall further in the weeks ahead.

Manufacturing output fell 0.7 per cent, having declined 0.1 per cent in November, according to the Central Statistical Office. Output fell 0.2 per cent in the final quarter, compared with the previous three months. The CSO says it now estimates that there is zero underlying growth in the sector.

Industrial production, which includes energy production, rose 0.4 per cent in December as cold weather boosted demand for gas and electricity. But even in this series, the CSO estimates that growth is running at about 0.5 per cent a year. There are few betting on the third

base rate cut in a row after today's monthly monetary meeting between Kenneth Clarke, the Chancellor, and Eddie George, Governor of the Bank of England. But many expect that rates will be cut by another quarter point at the meeting next month.

Ian Shepherdson, UK economist at HSBC Markets, said: "If these figures don't frighten the authorities, nothing will. The outlook for the next few months is bleak."

Economists put the sharp decline in manufacturing down to companies aggressively selling out of the substantial stockpiles built up last year when demand slowed unexpectedly sharply. This phenomenon is expected to continue for some months and to continue to depress overall economic growth.

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CLYDE PETROLEUM is to take over the operation of four oilfields in Indonesia with estimated gross reserves of 70 million barrels. In its first venture in South-East Asia, the North Sea exploration company is paying \$51 million for Marathon International's 31.25 per cent interest in the Kakap Production Sharing Contract, which covers the Natuna Sea. Clyde, which is buying Marathon Petroleum Indonesia, a subsidiary of the US oil company, says gross production this year will be about 43,000 barrels per day. *Terraviva* page 28

[The page contains faint, illegible handwritten notes.]

□ British Gas ring-fences its obligations □ Collapse of Malcolm Edwards's dream □ Dangers of running down staff

Through the Looking Glass

WE all seem to have stepped into one of those funny little parallel worlds dreamt of by theoretical physicists, where the Spanish Armada won, perhaps, or Rome never fell, or Jeremy Beadle became prime minister.

We used to live in a world where you signed deals and were required to honour them. We woke up in a place where a business can shrug off its responsibilities like a snake shedding its skin.

British Gas is splitting in two, with the Government's blessing, please note, so the good bits can sail happily and profitably into the sunset. The bad bits are lumped together in one big sack tied up with assets of unquantifiable value, and cast adrift to see if they will float. This may be the easiest way out of the take-or-pay contracts quandary, but it sets an awful precedent.

The concept of ring-fencing doubtful debts is an old one, if not especially honourable. You lend a thousand pounds to a subsidiary knowing well that if trading conditions turn sour, the liquidators can be put in how-ever much cash is held by the parent — a hard lesson learned a year ago by creditors of the Athens chain when Pentos put the shops into receivership.

What British Gas is doing is extending this a step further, creating a sort of retrospective

ring-fencing. You are owed a thousand by company A. You receive a letter explaining that due to difficult trading, the company has been split into company B (quite possibly bust) and company C (highly profitable). Your debt, alas, is with company B, it has been decided. Would five hundred quid do?

The North Sea producers were always going to have to bear much of the cost of those contracts because neither the consumer nor the taxpayer could accept any pain so close to an election, and British Gas could not afford to shoulder the burden alone.

But from now, the tougher the producers are in negotiations, which they say have yet to begin in earnest, the more likely the company holding those contracts is to fold. For this to happen, and for a company of Gas's reputation effectively to walk away from its obligations, is unthinkable — one can only hope.

Gas even has its own purpose-built scapegoat in Cedric Brown, who has to spend another couple of months in the public stocks in return for his contractual entitle-

ment and a cushy retirement. This neatly diverts attention from the role of Dick Giordano, even if his arrival as chairman two years ago did little to stem the group's abrupt decline.

Note also the inactivity of well-rewarded but supine non-executives including Peter, now Lord, Walker. His Energy Department first privatised the brute, with a promise of undying domestic market monopoly that allowed yet more of those disastrous North Sea contracts to be signed subsequently. What a tolerant lot they must be in the British Gas boardroom, to keep him around for so long.

Dog days for the privatisation ideal

ALLEGATIONS of fraud on the railways, a demerger at British Gas, fat cats in the utility boardrooms, no water in the pipes in Yorkshire. Even Conservative ministers admit privately that the ideological crown jewel of privatisation has lost some of its shine.

Coal Investments' admin-

PENNINGTON



istrators were keen to point out yesterday that the company is still trading while they examine the options, but the move into legal protection marks a further moment in the souring of the privatisation ideal.

If Coal Investments' troubles are not on the scale of Gas or the trains, this is only because the company is that much smaller. Rooted in the Conservative folk memory of the nationalisation of the pits and the strikes of the early 1970s, coal was seen as the ultimate privatisation.

As well as freeing the country from the political grip of the miners, it would free British Coal's managers and workforce from the iron grip of statism to grapple with the new world of

energy competition. Some of it has indeed worked out: few would now dispute, for example, the claims of Tower Colliery in South Wales to be a success.

Malcolm Edwards, British Coal's former marketing director, looked like he would dominate this new world. Rapidly out of Hobart House after clashing with the chairman, Neil Clarke, Edwards and his Coal Investments sold themselves hard to the City and to the generators as the key player in coal's post-privatisation landscape.

But the fatal blow for Mr Edwards looked to be when England's deep mines were handed out to rival Richard Budge's RJB Mining. Though the company's coal reserves in its pits are greater, if anything, than RJB's, the cost of rejuvenating old capacity, rather than RJB's business of running going-concern pits, has prompted more cashflow difficulties than banks have been able to stomach.

Accusations of bad faith, broken deals, overconfidence and overselling will now abound, no doubt. But the sorry road to the High Court yesterday may say

as much about the tarnished reality of some privatisations as it does about the company which ended up there.

Stocking up for another recession

ONE could be forgiven for seeing Armageddon in yesterday's slump in manufacturing, but the very dreadfulness of the figures contains the seed of renewed growth.

The sharp contraction in output has probably come as firms meet demand from the huge stock levels built up last year. This aggressive destocking suggests that there is some demand out there. The sooner that stocks return to more normal levels, the sooner growth can resume. This should make the stocks cycle a temporary blip, a matter of timing which does not affect the overall path of the economy.

But therein lies the danger. The current cycle is quite extreme. In the first nine months of last year, around 1 per cent of the 1.4 per cent growth in GDP was due simply to the build up of

stocks. Theoretically, the same will have to come off GDP, and manufacturing may even enter technical recession. It is then crucial how companies react in terms of staffing levels.

If they ride out the stocks cycle and hang on to staff, they can probably look forward to a bright second half. But if they start to shed labour — and the announcement by Jaguar yesterday is a warning — the outlook is rather less promising.

Jobs go, consumer confidence and spending falls, the Chancellor misses his growth and public borrowing targets, taxes do not fall again in the autumn. Calamity for the Government, for the economy, and for us all.

First principle

ALISTAIR DEFRIEZ at SBC Warburg helped defend Forte in a battle that was ultimately lost in part because Granada promised to pay a special dividend out of Forte's funds. Mr Defriez is now at the Takeover Panel, the first principle of whose code states that all shareholders must be treated equally — a principle apparently contravened by such dividends, which offer tax advantages to some. Mr Defriez said last night it was too early for him to comment on this happy coincidence. No doubt eventually he will get around to it.

BSkyB plans to offer pay-per-view channels

By ERIC ROSELEY

BSkyB, the satellite broadcaster, said that it planned to introduce pay-per-view programming by the end of this year and confirmed that it wanted to supply news to the ITV network.

Information on the expansion plans of BSkyB, which is 40 per cent owned by News International, owner of The Times, came as the company reported its strongest set of interim profits since its formation in 1990. It also announced a maiden interim dividend of 2.5p.

BSkyB said it would launch the pay-per-view channels in analogue form, once it found enough spectrum space. Items to be broadcast would include films and sporting events. The same film, for example, could be broadcast every 30 minutes in the evening, allowing subscribers to pick their viewing time.

Sam Chisholm, chief executive, said that the pay-per-view service "will create a brand new market".

Meanwhile, the company is pressing ahead with plans to start digital services, a move that would greatly expand the number of channels on offer.

David Elstein, head of programming, said that BSkyB was seeking to end the monopoly held by Independent Television News in supplying news to ITV. The Broadcasting Act 1993 called for competition in that business. ITV's current contract with ITN,



Sam Chisholm announcing a profit rise yesterday

worth about £57 million a year, expires next year.

BSkyB's pre-tax profit for the half year to the end of December almost doubled to £106.3 million on turnover of £464 million, up 30 per cent.

Earnings per share were 5.6p against 3.3p.

A sharp rise in the number of subscribers was behind the results. BSkyB took on a record 568,000 new subscribers in the half-year period,

raising its total to 5.2 million. Revenue from direct-to-home satellite customers rose 26 per cent to £337.8 million, while advertising revenue was up 18 per cent to £50.7 million.

The interim dividend will be paid on April 11. The shares closed down 22p at 392p. Traders said the decision by John Bridgeman, Director-General of Fair Trading, to refer BSkyB's agreement covering TV rights to Premier League football matches to the Restrictive Practices Court was behind the share slide.

GMTV, the breakfast station launched in 1993, reported its first profits yesterday and said that the worst trading days were behind it.

The company had an operating profit of £1 million in 1995, against a loss of £1.6 million in 1994 and £10.8 million previous year. It said that the turnaround was down to an 8 per cent growth in advertising revenue, to £50 million, plus a substantial increase in programme sponsorship revenue.

GMTV was also able to repay a £4 million loan to its owners, Carlton Communications, Granada, Scottish Television, Guardian Media Group and the Walt Disney Company.

Last year's profits came after payments of £48 million, covering the licence fee and a percentage of advertising revenue, to the Government. GMTV hopes to negotiate lower payments in 1999.

Matthey in \$40m hi-tech US deal

JOHNSON MATTHEY, the industrial holding company, is adding to its burgeoning interests in advanced technology materials with the acquisition of the in-house printed circuit board (PCB) interests of Cray Research in America for \$40 million.

The proposed acquisition stems from Johnson Matthey's \$170 million acquisition of Advanced Circuits, a market leader in high-technology PCBs and in plastic laminate packaging for semiconductors. Under the Cray deal, Johnson Matthey will acquire land, buildings, plant and machinery, and a workforce of around 350 people. The Cray facility at Chippewa Falls, Wisconsin, is considered one of the most advanced in America.

Johnson Matthey shares rose 2p to 561p yesterday.

Tempos, page 28

BT alliance to expand services in Germany

By MARTIN BARROW

BRITISH Telecom will today unveil a strategic alliance with RWE and Viag, two leading German utility companies, as it seeks to expand its international business.

The joint venture will offer services over fixed networks for business and private customers in Germany, and will operate independently of BT's Viag Interkom venture established last year.

The first stage would involve forming a joint network company that would combine fixed network activities in Germany. This could be expanded to include mobile phone services and satellite communications.

The three companies will sign a letter of intent in Bonn today, with a final agreement expected by the middle of this year. Neither RWE nor Viag



Bonfield: EC request

has a mobile phone concession in Germany, but it is expected they will bid when the next licence is awarded.

RWE had previously been a shareholder in CNI Communications Network International, a joint venture with Mannesmann and Deutsche

Bank but pulled out over differences in strategy and control with Mannesmann. CNI has subsequently signed a letter of intent to form an alliance with Unisource, a joint venture between America's AT&T, Swedish group Tella and the main telephone operators in The Netherlands, Spain and Switzerland.

BT, whose chief executive is Sir Peter Bonfield, yesterday asked the European Commission to examine the competition implications of North American technology being used by Unisource to provide one-stop telecoms services to multinational corporations.

BT believes that Unisource is likely to adopt AT&T software and standards for services such as private voice networks and fears this could lock the European partners into buying American hardware, restricting competition.

Eurostar journeys increase threefold

By JONATHAN PEYNN, TRANSPORT CORRESPONDENT

MORE than 1,000 high-speed Eurostar passenger trains passed through the Channel Tunnel between London, Paris and Brussels last month, a threefold increase over January last year, Eurotunnel announced yesterday.

A total of 1,071 high-speed Eurostars sped through the tunnel in January, against just 318 in January 1995.

There were also dramatic increases in the number of cars, motorcycles, trailers, caravans, campervans and coaches using Eurotunnel's shuttle trains, with an increase from 45,352 vehicles in January 1995 to 98,799 last month.

A total of 45,763 trucks went through the tunnel on freight

shuttle trains last month — more than double the 20,739 of January 1995. Through-freight trains last month totalled 536, up from 368 in January 1995.

The figures remain far short of forecasts made at the time of the 1994 rights issue. Just over three million passengers used Eurostar last year, against a forecast 9.2 million in Eurotunnel's prospectus. Five million passengers are expected to use the train in 1996.

The prospectus also forecast total freight traffic of 11.14 million gross tonnes in 1995. Latest government figures suggest an actual figure of about 4.5 million tonnes.

Tempos, page 28

Record \$3.1m fine for Sara Lee

FROM A CORRESPONDENT IN WASHINGTON

SARA LEE, the American consumer products company, has been ordered to pay a record \$3.1 million fine for failing to notify US antitrust authorities before the acquisition of assets from Reckitt and Colman.

The Justice Department filed the suit and settlement agreement in the US District Court, claiming that Sara Lee violated antitrust notification requirements with its 1991 purchase of the shoe care products division of Reckitt & Colman for about \$25.8 million. The complaint said that the contract failed to provide a fair market value for the US assets.

Sara Lee gave a low estimate of the US assets, claiming that

it was not required to report the transaction because the assets were worth less than the \$15 million limit.

At the time of the acquisition, Sara Lee and its Kiwi division had a 90 per cent share of the US shoe polish market — Reckitt & Colman's Griffin was one of the few remaining competitors.

"The law is simple and clear. So is Sara Lee's violation," said Anne Bingham, assistant attorney general. "Sara Lee flouted its legal requirements in order to frustrate legal scrutiny."

Officials said the penalty was the highest ever imposed under the 1976 Hart-Rodino antitrust law.

Water failure is investigated

By CHRISTINE BUCKLEY

THE inquiry into what went wrong with Yorkshire water supplies last year began yesterday when Professor John Uff, leading the inquiry funded by Yorkshire Water, declared it fully public and appealed for the support of Yorkshire MPs who are seeking a government investigation. He said: "This is a completely open debate and I hope the MPs will take part so they can see it constitutes what they are calling for."

Professor Uff, an engineering expert with arbitration experience, said that the inquiry

would produce guidelines for maintaining water supply. He said: "We must never get to the situation again when we have to have tanking."

Last year, Yorkshire Water, whose leakage rate has been calculated at 33 per cent, one of the highest in the developed world, ran tankers from the Tees to maintain supplies after last year's dry summer lowered reservoir stocks to about 10 per cent of capacity.

Professor Uff aims to deliver his report which will have fundamental implications for all privatised water companies,

by the end of April after he has considered written evidence and held two weeks of public hearings. The report will go to Yorkshire Water, whose chairman, Sir Gordon Jones, last year said that he wished to leave before his compulsory retirement date of next year, and to contributors. Professor Uff said that he was confident that the report would pass into the public domain swiftly.

Yorkshire Water said it hoped the inquiry will lead to the creation of standards of service for the industry.



Jones: sought to retire

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News of Gas demerger fails to excite investors

IF the measures taken by British Gas to sort out its far-reaching problems had been designed to impress the stock market, they failed miserably. Traders appeared perplexed by the news and the equity market spent another cautious session. But it gave investors the opportunity to recover their poise after Monday's sharp falls.

Share prices generally traded in a 12-point band and not even an early jump in the fortunes of the Dow Jones average could inject new life into a tired looking market.

The FT-100 index closed virtually all square, ending just 0.9 of a point better at 3,747.5. Turnover reached 833 million shares, helped by heavy trading in British Gas where 53.8 million shares had changed hands by the close. Genuine retail support remained thin on the ground.

In early trading British Gas touched 23p, with market-makers ready to take a positive line on the proposed split and departure of the much criticised Cedric Brown, as chief executive.

Not everyone was pleased with the move. Some analysts were quick to pour scorn on the decision to put the Morecambe Bay gasfield into the British Gas Energy division. In the event, shares of British Gas closed 2p easier at 242.4p.

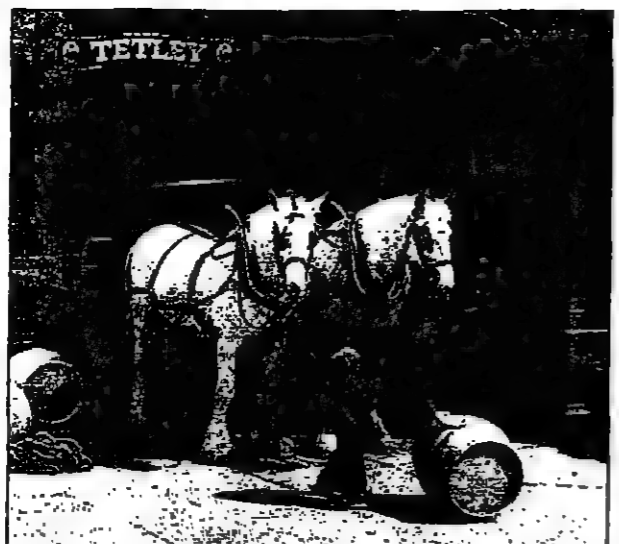
There was not much else in the way of good news around to cheer investors. Depressed sales of spirits and the effects of recent disposals among its food interests have taken their toll of Allied Domecq, whose shares include Tetley's beer.

Shares in the food and drinks group fell 8p to 306.4p after it gave warning that profits in the first six months of the year would be down by around 20 per cent.

Brokers immediately downgraded their profit estimates, with most of them now looking for between £575 million and £620 million at the pre-tax level, compared with £635 million last time.

Lehman Brothers, the broker, also expects that the company will have to cut last year's dividend payout of 39.35p by about a third.

The warning came at the group's annual meeting, where Michael Jackman, chairman, told shareholders that European spirits markets remain difficult and that Mexican profits in sterling terms



Allied Domecq shares fell 10p on a profits warning

are down. Profits would also be hit by cuts to both jobs and stock levels throughout its supply chain.

Analysts were also considering the possibility of lowering their profit forecasts for BSkyB after the news that the Office of Fair Trading had referred the group's two exclusive agreements to screen Premier League football to the

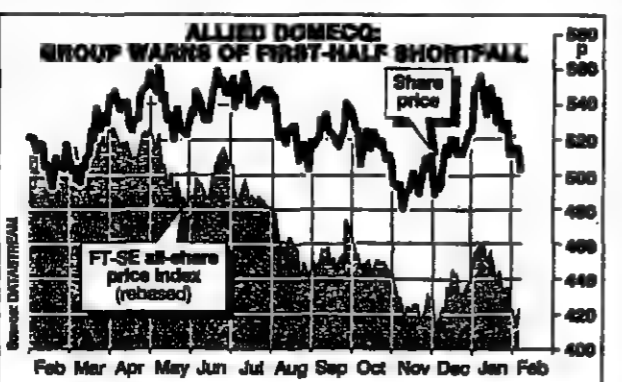
en interim dividend of 2.5p, with Sam Chisholm claiming there was further scope for increased revenues and profits in the second half.

The BSkyB share price finished 22p down at 392p, with brokers worried by the growing prospect of regulatory interference which could affect the group's long-term earnings potential.

Vaux, the pubs to nursing homes group, fell 8p to 283p as 355,010 shares were traded in a market where dealers normally make a price in 5,000 shares at a time. The group gave a presentation to brokers and failed to make much of an impression. It seems that occupancy levels in its nursing homes are on the slide.

Restrictive Practices Court. The OFT said both deals contained significant restrictions on competition. The move came on the day when BSkyB, which is 40 per cent owned by News International, owner of The Times, reported an impressive set of half-year figures showing pre-tax profits rising from £55 million to £106.3 million. The figures were accompanied by a mid-

Signs that Eurotunnel may be starting to pull ahead on the battle for cross-Channel ferry traffic lifted its shares 5p to 79p. The latest traffic figures show Le Shuttle doubled the number of cars it carried during January, to 96,971. A total of 1.2 million cars were transported during 1995, which brokers said gave it about 40 per cent of Channel traffic.



Feb Mar Apr May Jun Jul Aug Sep Oct Nov Dec Jan Feb

P&O, its big rival, seemed unperturbed, finishing 3p firmer at 541p.

Frost Group, the petrol retailer, clawed back some of its recent losses with a rise of 8p to 123p as it emerged that Mercury Asset Management had taken advantage of the weak share price to mop up a further 1.7 million shares. This takes its total holding to 14.5 million, or 15.4 per cent. Frost has been a casualty of the recent petrol price war.

Johnson Matthey climbed 8p to 567p after announcing it was buying the in-house printed circuit board operations of Cray Research for \$40 million. The group gave a briefing to brokers after the announcement and left them with a favourable impression.

A threat by Beazer Homes to spike the proposed acquisition of Trafalgar House's Ideal Homes by Persimmon failed to rattle the latter, whose shares finished unchanged at 186p.

Beazer complained it has not had enough time to top Beazer's £170 million offer but intended to renew its interest. Trafalgar finished 1p cheaper at 31p while Beazer finished 1p to 173p.

RTZ, the mining finance group, slipped 5p to 943p on suggestions that James Capel, the broker, had reduced its recommendation from a "hold" to a "buy".

Nervous selling also left Maird, the recent high-flyer, 16p down at 153p. Only last month the shares were changing hands at 229p and last year trading at 354p.

GILT-EDGED: A better performance was enjoyed as investors took the view that Monday's losses had been overdone. Prices opened firmer and sentiment was cheered by news of a drop in manufacturing output last month. Banks and building societies were reported to be active buyers of stock trading in the five to seven year range.

In the futures pit, the March series of the long gilt jumped £13.34 to £106.73 as the total number of contracts completed reached 65,000.

In the cash market, Treasury 8 per cent 2013 rose £1.16 to £100.16, while at the shorter end Treasury 8 per cent 2000 was £1.16 better at £104.4.

NEW YORK: Shares on Wall Street continued to rise, with the Dow Jones industrial average 25.65 points higher at 5,433.24 by midday.

New York (midday)

Dow Jones 5433.24 (+25.65)

S&P Composite 633.47 (+2.04)

Tokyo Nikkei Average 20951.15 (+92.77)

Hong Kong Hang Seng 11397.38 (+22.74)

Amsterdam SOE Index 592.73 (+4.38)

Sydney ASX 2269.1 (+2.8)

Frankfurt DAX 2428.28 (+9.22)

Singapore Straits 2689.71 (+17.7)

Brussels CMC-40 1986.47 (+4.88)

Paris CAC-40 1986.47 (+4.88)

Zurich SMI 2756.40 (+4.10)

London FT 100 3747.5 (+0.9)

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In need of allies

IT SEEMS sadly appropriate that Michael Jackman's farewell speech should contain a warning that Allied Domecq's interim profits will fall 20 per cent. Having landed the top job almost five years ago after the company made big losses in foreign exchange, he has presided over a lengthy period of stagnation. Profits have remained flat, the share price has gone nowhere and the company's stock market value of around £5.3 billion is little changed since late 1991, despite the £700 million Domecq acquisition. Shareholders who attended yesterday's annual meeting to see Jackman hand the baton to Sir Christopher Hogg had little for which to be grateful, even before the warning. Most accept that it will take more than a change of chairmanship to restore growth.

Allied's investment timing could certainly

have been better. Domecq increased its exposure to markets in Spain and Mexico just as the former entered recession and the latter became insolvent.

The Carlsberg Tetley joint venture in UK brewing is big, but not big enough to dictate terms to the market and its brands are unloved. Potential buyers are scarce and the scenario is unlikely to change, at least until the market impact of Scottish & Newcastle's Courage takeover is clearer.

Spirits will continue to be dogged by sluggish demand in the main markets, where Allied's brand portfolio is often second best. High street names such as Big Steak Pubs and Dunkin' Donuts do not set consumers' pulses racing. Fundamental change is required if Allied shares are to benefit from a rerating.

Clyde Petroleum

KNOWN best for its skill in squeezing more oil out of mature North Sea fields, Clyde Petroleum's decision to operate the Kalap field in Indonesia might seem rash. For oil companies, Indonesia is a notoriously harsh regime with typical production-sharing contracts reserving 85 per cent of the price of every barrel sold to the Government. Investors will also be aware that Clyde is investing in a field where big brother Lasso recently sold a stake. However, Clyde argues that a strategy that makes money from mature assets in The Netherlands also applies further afield.

The price - stuck at about \$3.50 per barrel for Clyde's 11 million barrel net interest - looks sensible, especially when compared with its sale last year of part

of the Gryphon field in the North Sea at a price equivalent to \$7.50 per barrel. More interesting is the scope to increase reserves through low-risk exploration. High Indonesian tax rates carry the benefit of full deduction of exploration costs and Clyde reckons the two wells it will drill this year carry a net cost of only \$500,000.

Clyde's strategy is to pick up the scraps discarded by major oil companies. Kalap fits the bill, being too small to justify the overheads of a Marathon. Under Clyde's lean management, the number of expatriate staff will fall by a third and the company hopes to make a 20 per cent return with profits from exploration on top.



Johnson Matthey

IN A curious twist of fate and after decades of disappointment and public money down the tube, Britain now boasts an engineering company with a leading position in the semiconductor industry. Through its newly acquired US subsidiary, ACI, Johnson Matthey will become the biggest producer of laminate packaging for semiconductors.

JM is not quite there yet - production is still in the low thousands - but what has changed with yesterday's takeover of a factory from Cray is the speed at which ACI will be able to deliver. Previously, JM believed that it would take two and a half years to build a factory from scratch and bring it to peak production but JM reckons it will be working flat out within a year.

If JM is to be believed, the potential is staggering with annual sales of \$100 million only a year away. The growth

is expected because major companies, such as Intel, are converting from ceramic to plastic packaging, a market worth \$170 million in the current year with a projected growth rate of 100 per cent. That would transform JM's electronics material division.

The technology is not unique - two Japanese companies are capable of producing laminate packaging but JM's advantage, for the moment, is speed. With the Cray factory, it is probably a year ahead of its competitors and in this industry, early birds catch worms.

Eurotunnel

THE trouble with Eurotunnel is that its success is simply do not matter. Yesterday's traffic figures showed dramatic year-on-year gains in passenger and freight volumes but these are a molehill of good news compared with its mountain of debt.

Sir Alastair Morton's quib-

ble tilts at two governments, three national railway systems and 225 banks are entertaining but time is running out for Eurotunnel. Interest on the £8 billion of borrowings is accumulating at the rate of £600 million a year. Interest on the deferred interest shovels another £50 million a year on to the pile.

Having been rebuffed by the French and British Governments over a bizarre scheme for a state underwritten megalomaniac to pay off the banks, Sir Alastair is beginning to run out of options. Any suggestion that the Labour Party might come to the rescue after the next election is chancing at straws.

However, new Labour is unlikely to be attracted to the idea of bailing out shareholders in Eurotunnel, a project that was a showpiece of Thatcherite private finance. In any event, Gordon Brown is unlikely to get the keys to the Treasury in time.

EDITED BY CARL MORTIMER

LONDON COMMODITY EXCHANGE				CHIEF OILS (London & Rotterdam)				GNI LONDON GRAIN FUTURES				
COCOA				CRUDE OILS (Barrel FOB)				WHEAT (Bushel)				
Mar	910-920	May	1020-1030	Brent	15.80-16.00	0-20	Mar	121-15	Mar	112-75	Barley	122-75
Jul	920-930	Jul	930-940	Brent 15 day (Apr)	16.00	10-10	May	123-10	May	114-40	Wheat	114-40
Sep	930-940	Sep	940-950	Brent 15 day (May)	16.00	10-10	Jul	125-10	Jul	107-10	Wheat	107-10
Nov	940-950	Nov	950-960	W Tames Intermediate (Mar)	17.40	10-10	Sep	111-20	Sep	110-00	Wheat	110-00
Jan	950-960	Jan	960-970	W Tames Intermediate (Apr)	17.20	10-10	Nov	113-00	Nov	112-00	Wheat	112-00
Mar	960-970	Mar	970-980				Jan	115-00	Jan	114-00	Wheat	114-00
May	980-990	May	990-1000				Volume	1000	Volume	200		
Jul	1000-1010	Jul	1010-1020									
Sep	1020-1030	Sep	1030-1040									
Nov	1040-1050	Nov	1050-1060									
Jan	1060-1070	Jan	1070-1080									
Mar	1080-1090	Mar	1090-1100									
May	1100-1110	May	1110-1120									
Jul	1120-1130	Jul	1130-1140									
Sep	1140-1150	Sep	1150-1160									
Nov	1160-1170	Nov	1170-1180									
Jan	1180-1190	Jan	1190-1200									
Mar	1200-1210	Mar	1210-1220									
May	1220-1230	May	1230-1240									
Jul	1240-1250	Jul	1250-1260									
Sep	1260-1270	Sep	1270-1280									
Nov	1280-1290	Nov	1290-1300									
Jan	1300-1310	Jan	1310-1320									
Mar	1320-1330	Mar	1330-1340									
May	1340-1350	May	1350-1360									
Jul	1360-1370	Jul	1370-1380									
Sep	1380-1390	Sep	1390-1400									
Nov	1400-1410	Nov	1410-1420									
Jan	1420-1430	Jan	1430-1440									
Mar	1440-1450	Mar	1450-1460									
May	1460-1470	May	1470-1480									
Jul	1480-1490	Jul	1490-1500									
Sep	1500-1510	Sep	1510-1520									
Nov	1520-1530	Nov	1530-1540									
Jan	1540-1550	Jan	1550-1560									
Mar	1560-1570	Mar	1570-1580									
May	1580-1590	May	1590-1600									
Jul	1600-1610	Jul	1610-1620									
Sep	1620-1630	Sep	1630-1640									
Nov	1640-1650	Nov	1650-1660									
Jan	1660-1670	Jan	1670-1680									
Mar	1680-1690	Mar	1690-1700									
May	1700-1710	May	1710-1720									
Jul	1720-1730	Jul	1730-1740									
Sep	1740-1750	Sep	1750-1760									
Nov	1760-1770	Nov	1770-1780									
Jan	1780-1790	Jan	1790-1800									
Mar	1800-1810	Mar	1810-1820									
May	1820-1830	May	1830-1840									
Jul	1840-1850	Jul	1850-1860									
Sep	1860-1870	Sep	1870-1880									
Nov	1880-1890	Nov	1890-1900									
Jan	1900-1910	Jan	1910-1920									
Mar	1920-1930	Mar	1930-1940									
May	1940-1950	May	1950-1960									
Jul	1960-1970	Jul	1970-1980									
Sep	1980-1990	Sep	1990-2000									
Nov	2000-2010	Nov	2010-2020									
Jan	2020-2030	Jan	2030-2040									
Mar	2040-2050	Mar	2050-2060									
May	2060-2070	May	2070-2080									
Jul	2080-2090	Jul	2090-2100									
Sep	2100-2110	Sep	2110-2120									
Nov	2120-2130	Nov	2130-2140									
Jan	2140-2150	Jan	2150-2160									
Mar	2160-2170	Mar	2170-2180									
May	2180-2190	May	2190-2200									
Jul	2200-2210	Jul	2210-2220									
Sep	2220-2230	Sep	2230-2240									
Nov	2240-2250	Nov	2250-2260									
Jan	2260-2270	Jan	2270-2280									
Mar	2280-2290	Mar	2290-2300									
May	2300-2310	May	2310-2320									
Jul	2320-2330	Jul	2330-2340									
Sep	2340-2350	Sep	2350-2360									
Nov	2360-2370	Nov	2370-2380									
Jan	2380-2390	Jan	2390-2400									
Mar	2400-2410	Mar	2410-2420									
May	2420-2430	May	2430-2440									
Jul	2440-2450	Jul	2450-2460									
Sep	2460-2470	Sep	2470-2480									
Nov	2480-2490	Nov	2490-2500									
Jan	2500-2510	Jan	2510-2520									
Mar	2520-2530	Mar	2530-2540									
May	2540-2550	May	2550-2560									
Jul	2560-2570	Jul	2570-2580									
Sep	2580-2590	Sep	2590-2600									
Nov	2600-2610	Nov	2610-2620									
Jan	2620-2630	Jan	2630-2640									
Mar	2640-2650	Mar	2650-2660									
May	2660-2670	May	2670-2680									
Jul	2680-2690	Jul	2690-2700									
Sep	2700-2710	Sep	2710-2720									
Nov	2720-2730	Nov	2730-2740									
Jan	2740-2750	Jan	2750-2760									
Mar	2760-2770	Mar	2770-2780									
May	2780-2790	May	2790-2800									
Jul	2800-2810	Jul	2810-2820									
Sep	2820-2830	Sep	2830-2840									
Nov	2840-2850	Nov	2850-2860									
Jan	2860-2870	Jan	2870-2880									
Mar	2880-2890	Mar	2890-2900									
May	2900-2910	May	2910-2920									
Jul	2920-2930	Jul	2930-2940									
Sep	2940-2950	Sep	2950-2960									
Nov	2960-2970	Nov	2970-2980									
Jan	2980-2990	Jan	2990-3000									
Mar	3000-3010	Mar	3010-3020									
May	3020-3030	May	3030-3040									
Jul	3040-3050	Jul	3050-3060									
Sep	3060-3070	Sep	3070-3080									
Nov	3080-3090	Nov	3090-3100									
Jan	3100-3110	Jan	3110-3120									
Mar	3120-3130	Mar	3130-3140									
May	3140-3150	May	3150-3160									
Jul	3160-3170	Jul	3170-3180									
Sep	3180-3190	Sep	3190-3200									
Nov	3200-3210	Nov	3210-3220									
Jan	3220-3230	Jan	3230-3240									
Mar	3240-3250	Mar	3250-3260									
May	3260-3270	May	3270-3280									
Jul	3280-3290	Jul	3290-3300									
Sep	3300-3310	Sep	3310-3320									
Nov	3320-3330	Nov	3330-3340									
Jan	3340-3350	Jan	3350-3360									
Mar	3360-3370	Mar	3370-3380									
May	3380-3390	May	3390-3400									
Jul	3400-3410	Jul	3410-3420									
Sep	3420-3430	Sep	3430-3440									
Nov	3440-3450	Nov	3450-3460									
Jan	3460-3470	Jan	3470-3480									
Mar	3480-3490	Mar	3490-3500									

THE TIMES CITY DIARY

Cedric waves goodbye to tact

CEDRIC BROWN, who has managed to irritate most of British Gas's 1.6 million shareholders and many of its 19 million customers was in danger yesterday of offending the most important man at the privatised company — Richard Giordano — who will effectively be chairman and chief executive from May.

Brown insisted he is retiring because British Gas will be turning itself into a "new management team" and he will be appointed, and they will want two young chief executives.

He added: "They don't want old men staggering around."

If Giordano didn't wince at the man on whom he had just lavished praise, he should have.

Brown, who was born on March 7, 1935, is almost a year his junior. His grand "old" chairman Giordano turns 62 on March 24.

Sitting uneasily

THE sale by Hambros Bank of its mining subsidiary brings with it some unexpected dividends. Hugh Jenkins, the former investment director of the Prudential, has found office space within Hambros' Tower Hill premises for the time being at least. Jenkins, who is non-executive director of such organisations as Rank, Thorn EMI and Garmore, as well as being the chairman of Hambros Falcon property trust, should not get too comfortable, however, as the bank is planning to move the occupants of its Brentwood office down to Tower Hill and, of course, there could well be increasing competition for the desk.

ACCOUNTS DEPT



"We are demerging the profit account from the loss account"

New ball game

BRIAN QUINN has been hailed a "missionary" at the Bank of England where he has worked for 26 years, latterly responsible for banking supervision and surveillance. He retires on February 29, and the next day joins his beloved Celtic Football Club as non-executive director and vice-chairman. A bank colleague said Quinn "tried to convert everyone, and even put a green and white poster in his PA's office".

Starter for £2,000

CITY types will be brushing up their buzzer skills for the St John Ambulance annual Brain Game general knowledge quiz at the Guildhall tomorrow, won last year by law firm Allen & Overy. For the fourth year running, the question-master will be sports commentator Dickie Davies. At £2,000 a team ticket, it's all to raise £50,000 for St John Ambulance, the Lord Mayor's charity.

Appealing idea

MICHAEL JACKAMAN, who is standing down at the end of March as chairman of Allied Domecq, has decided how he will be spending his retirement. He is to be chairman of an appeal to raise £20 million for a new children's hospital in Bristol.

COLIN CAMPBELL

Demerger offers lifeline for dinosaur monopoly

Ross Tieman looks at how British Gas has had to come to terms with a more competitive market

Ten years after flotation as a vast monopoly, British Gas is breaking itself up. The decision to demerge the business that supplies gas to 19 million homes and a third of Britain's businesses is a logical response to the piecemeal introduction of competition over the past decade.

With the last vestiges of its guaranteed market on the verge of being prised open, the board, under American Richard Giordano, has concluded that British Gas is a dinosaur, incapable of survival in today's cut-throat world. Only by reinventing itself, in two parts, can it thrive.

At a special meeting in April next year, the company's 1.6 million shareholders will be asked to approve the creation of a new listed company. Provisionally called British Gas Energy, this will contain the gas supply business, selling gas to families and businesses; the service business, looking after appliance maintenance; a gas trading arm, called Accord; and the North and South Morecambe gasfields, accounting for 15 per cent of United Kingdom peak demand.

If the proposal is approved by holders of 51 per cent of British Gas shares, the company's investors will receive free shares in British Gas Energy. They will also retain their shares in the far larger residual business, provisionally named TransCo International.

This will own the pipeline system, delivering gas for storage including British Gas Energy, in return for fees. It will also own the rest of British Gas's exploration, production and distribution activities — concentrated in Asia, South America and Eastern Europe — and its gas-fired power stations in Britain and overseas.

Such an outcome would have been inconceivable on that day 30 years ago, when the first gas from the newly discovered southern North Sea basin was piped ashore.

In the two decades that followed, Britain's coal-grimed town centre gasworks, with their cooling ovens and gasometers, were progressively levelled. In their place, British Gas's state-owned monopoly built a high-pressure network of pipelines and mains beneath the streets, delivering natural gas to almost every sizeable town in England, Wales and southern Scotland.

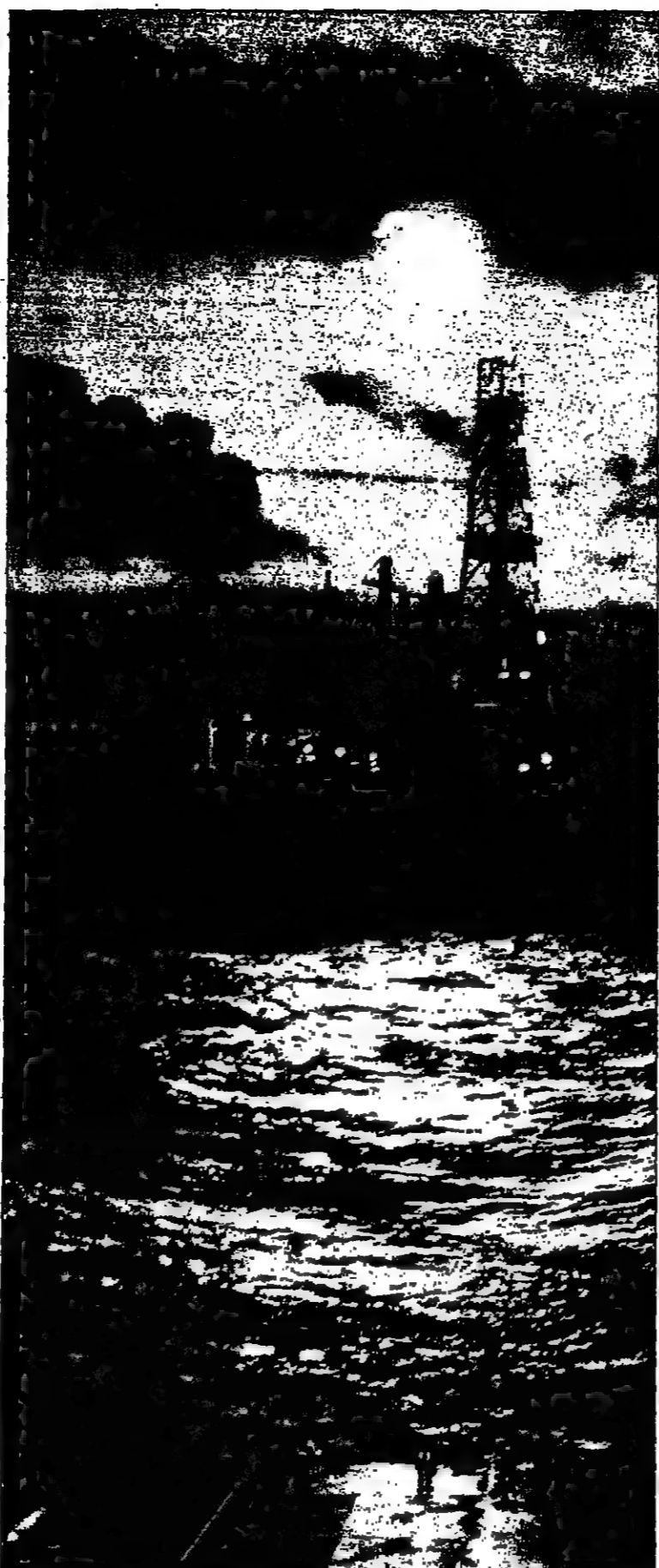
It was a formidable engineering achievement, and the envy of many countries overseas. At privatisation, in 1986, gas had come to account for 30 per cent of Britain's primary energy consumption, from just seven per cent two decades earlier.

By the time the Government got around to selling British Gas with its celebrated "Tell Sid" advertising campaign in 1986, many politicians and academics already had their doubts about privatising monopolies. When British Telecom was sold two years earlier, the Government had licensed Mercury Communications, owned by Cable and Wireless, to build a rival phone network.

But intense lobbying by Sir Denis Rooke, the tough and abrasive British Gas chairman, combined with the desire of Lord Walker, the then Energy Secretary, to maximise proceeds from the sale. It was inconceivable that anyone could afford to build a rival pipeline network. Gas distribution was deemed a "natural monopoly" and left intact. The company was sold with a 25-year monopoly of the gas market under 25,000 terms, giving only big business the right to choose alternative suppliers.

But once the Government had tucked away its £5.43 billion sale proceeds, the gas regulator, Sir James McKinnon, quickly began to pick away at this cosy arrangement.

Although Sir Denis and his successors resisted at every turn, Sir James gradually turned competition into reality for business customers. He forced British Gas to charge realistic prices for gas delivery, and also



British Gas intends to split its operations into two separate companies

snipped away at the myriad bindings that impeded efforts by customers to buy their gas elsewhere.

Because of its statutory obligation to ensure that gas supplies would be maintained, even on the coldest winter day, British Gas bought virtually all the North Sea gas output, on contracts lasting up to 40 years. At one point, Sir James was obliged to introduce a "gas release" scheme, simply so that rivals could obtain adequate supplies.

This stubborn resistance to competition sowed the seeds of British Gas's biggest troubles today. Producers responded by putting in hand the development of massive new capacity. Today, the spot price of gas has

halved, rivals can undercut, and British Gas has more fuel than its diminishing band of customers can burn. Moreover, it is paying more than the market price for the fuel.

Quite why British Gas continued signing long-term contracts despite mounting evidence that the Government would tear up its monopoly remains a puzzle. Successive reports from the Monopolies and Mergers Commission showed which way the wind was blowing. The first, in 1988, obliged the company to publish tariffs to industrial and commercial users, paving the way for a massive loss of market share.

In a surprise move in May 1992, Tim Eggar, the Energy Minister, abruptly cut the competition threshold from 25,000 to 2,500 tonnes. A subsequent two-year inquiry, triggered in July by Cedric Brown, chief executive, in an effort to clarify the pace at which competition was to spread, tore up the privatisation deal.

The Monopolies and Mergers Commission concluded that British Gas should be obliged to separate its pipelines business from its supply arm, so that the entire market, including 19 million homes, could be opened to competition. But the timetable for the separation was to be a gentle one, stretching into the next century to minimise the trauma.

Ministers bought the idea, but spurned the patience. The Government then drafted a new Gas Act, passed last autumn, which opens the household market to competition progressively by January 1, 1999. A pilot trial for the phased opening, embracing half a million homes in the South West, is running late but is set to start in May or June this year.

TransCo, operator of British Gas's £18 billion pipeline network, is already, to all intents and purposes, a stand-alone company. It generates profits of around £700 million a year in spite of its prices being capped by the regulator. TransCo is the cash-cow funding overseas expansion in oil/gas exploration and production, distribution and power generation. These businesses, which will form TransCo International, are the heart of the existing British Gas.

Demerging British Gas Energy is largely designed to spin off the problems arising from the company's failure to respond effectively to the faster than expected loss of its monopoly. Since being allowed to abandon publication of tariffs, British Gas Energy has arrested the decline of its share of commercial and industrial markets at 35 per cent. But its deliveries to households can only fall as competition takes root.

That will increase the company's gas surplus, making it all the more urgent to renegotiate take-or-pay contracts with North Sea gas producers, which are also being dumped in BGE. To offset these liabilities, currently estimated at £1.5 billion, BGE will be bolstered with the key assets of British Gas's Morecambe gasfields in the Irish Sea. All these uncertainties and liabilities will make for an explosive cocktail. Shares in BGE will be a speculator's play, not for the faint hearted, and certainly not for widows and orphans.

Even TransCo International will be a far cry from the steady-as-she-goes utility sold to the public in 1986. But with Cedric Brown, 40 years in the industry, goes the last of the British Gas old guard. The new companies will have younger managers, trained in the private sector.

At last British Gas has bowed to the logic of its increasingly competitive market. Perhaps the new companies may at last begin to reward, rather than fail, their shareholders.

Post Office still delivering in political storm

Privatisation of the Royal Mail is an issue once more, Philip Bassett says

In the next few weeks, business and consumers will receive an unhappy jolt to outgoings when the Post Office announces a price rise — of probably 1p on stamps — which will also affect the Government's efforts to control inflation.

Politics and the post are interwoven, and the two come into play today when MPs debate the future of the Post Office. The Labour-sponsored debate has been prompted by the raising once again, by the Prime Minister, of the possibility of privatising the Post Office. John Major last month surprised many Conservative MPs when he said that the Government would consider whether to include a new attempt to privatise the Royal Mail in its general election manifesto.

"I think it will be in," says one minister. "The benefits of including it are twofold: it takes the difficulty of weighing the agenda forward, and shows we are not being complacent. And it does give a positive focus on privatisation, after a couple of years in which — because of British Gas and other things — it has not gone as well as it should."

After failing to privatise the Post Office two years ago, when, in spite of efforts led by Michael Heseltine, ministers could not muster a majority of its own backbenchers for the move, returning to the issue might appear to be somewhere between brave and desperate.

Labour will argue that Mr Major's suggestion, which followed similar musings by Mr Heseltine and Kenneth Clarke, the Chancellor, is engendered by internal politics of the Conservative Party — John Major's need to offer some red meat to the Tory Right.

Kim Howells, Labour's spokesman on the Post Office, says: "This is entirely driven by Major's desire to emphasise that he is not scared to take on the most controversial issues."

Phillip Oppenheim, the Industry Minister, will attack what he sees as Labour's lack of detailed, practical policy on the Post Office and will emphasise the Post Office's performance under the Conservatives, and says: "There is a strong case on investment

by the Post Office, which, in real terms, is double what it was 15 years ago."

The Government's aim is to give the Post Office as much commercial freedom as it can, without going as far as the Post Office wants — "We're not going to allow them to sell condoms," says one Department of Trade and Industry source — because of the effect on competitors of a Post Office free to do whatever it likes in the high street.

Labour's problem with the Post Office is as acute, and in some ways a test of whether some policies promoted by Tony Blair work in practice. For a Labour government, would there be a realistic middle way between the two extremes that Mr Blair rejects, of untrammelled free markets and privatisation, and of the old nationalised control?

Both political parties, too, face the difficulty of weighing themselves off the cash that the Post Office provides for the Treasury. To the annoyance of its senior managers, the Post Office faces contributing close to £1 billion over the next three years to the Government's cash flow. They doubt that Labour could resist the milch cow

any more than can the Conservatives. When Bill Cockburn was its chief executive, the Post Office was seen to have painted itself into a corner — seeking privatisation, and with nowhere to go when denied it. Mr Cockburn is now with WH Smith, and his successor, John Roberts, wants to draw a line under the insecurity of the past three years, while the Government considered its future, and to concentrate on winning business in Europe and the US, as European postal businesses and other communications cut into the Post Office's market.

If that means rejection of Mr Major's dalliance with privatisation, so be it. Post Office managers calculate that, to proceed, the Government would need to be re-elected with a majority of 20, and consider that unlikely on poll evidence. So the Post Office is buckling down to business, leaving the politicians to it, but knowing that the next election is crucial for Britain's postal services.



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The village that was all but lost

From Helen J. A. Gibbons
Sir, It was good of Tempus to elevate the village of Ashted to a Surrey town, namesake of Ashted Group plc (Business News, February 1).

Thanks to overzealous parking restrictions in the late 1980s, followed by attempts by landlords to massively hike rent reviews, the village of Ashted was all but lost.

In space of a few years, the butcher, baker, watchmaker, ironmonger, cobbler, confectioner, travel agent and others disappeared. Some are now returning to join the public houses (three) and banks (five) able to ride the recession.

Yours faithfully,
HELEN GIBBONS,
10 Greycoat Place,
SWIP 1SB.

A&L flotation requires legitimate authority

From Mr Noel Falconer
Sir, By what authority does Alliance & Leicester propose to discriminate between its members "free share bonanza for A&L members." (February 1)? This must surely be in a form that the courts will recognise. Approval by the Building Societies Commission looks less than adequate. Retrospective approval, after gaining from the situation that is being altered, as A&L has, with speculative deposits — is a breach of

The responsibility for mis-selling and compensation

From Mr K. D. Boyd
Sir, I believe regulation will never work. The pensions mis-selling arose largely because Andrew Large and others failed to see the pitfalls of deregulation of pensions. Now a scapegoat must be found. The new phase of this ideology will occur when actuaries in charge of pension funds are

Satisfied pension policyholders need protection

From Mr Robin Hill
Sir, Much is being said on behalf of those who may have suffered through the alleged "mis-selling" of pensions but nothing on behalf of the very many long-established policyholders who are well satisfied with the advice received but are understandably concerned about the possible effect of any compensation payments on the performance of their own

policies, particularly those with mutual societies. We are innocent bystanders and must be protected. Who is representing this majority interest and what assurances can be given that existing policyholders will suffer no loss over this issue? Yours faithfully,
ROBIN HILL,
Southdown House,
Lower Froyle, Alton, Hants.

Human factors in the employment equation

From J. T. Beckford
Sir, Why make such a mystery of the continued discrepancy between LFS and unemployment statistics ("Would real earnings growth spell economic suicide?", January 30). Some employers, in the interest of downsizing prestige and a tendency to discount casual or part-time labour, will deliberately minimise their workforce. At the same time, those recently laid off, for reasons of pride, shame or

hope, may well delay joining the dole queue; while many women who take on short-term part-time jobs find it too much trouble to register as unemployed when these jobs are not available. These human factors make it seem unlikely that the "gap" will ever be closed. Yours faithfully,
J. T. BECKFORD,
112 Churchill Road,
Cheltenham,
Gloucestershire.

Tecs in favour of efficiency survey

From Mr Chris Humphries
Sir, Your article "Freedom for Tecs urged in call for savings" (January 22, 1996) misrepresents the reaction of Tecs to the recently published Efficiency Scrutiny.

Tecs have supported the conduct of the Efficiency Scrutiny since its outset in its attempt to simplify the level of imposed bureaucracy which surrounds their operation, and frustrates employers and training providers in serving the needs of staff and clients.

Throughout the report, the need to maintain adequate levels of accountability for public funds is acknowledged, and the report seeks to identify ways by which that can be achieved whilst reducing unnecessary administrative burdens.

It was, in fact, the Tec National Council which wrote to Ministers asking that the report be implemented in full, and that there be "no cherry-picking" (although we didn't use that phrase). Ministers have, in turn, indicated to the council that they will give the report their fullest consideration. Yours faithfully,
CHRIS HUMPHRIES,
Director of Policy and Strategy,
Tec National Council
Westminster Tower,
3 Albert Embankment,
London SE1.

THE TIMES INTEREST SURVEY

[illegible]

Counting the cost of empty properties

RACHEL KELLY
● Empty Homes Agency, 0171-82
6288.

At the Vogen's Mill development at St Saviour's Dock in Mill Street, SE8, a flat cost £350,000 in 1981, £120,000 in 1992, and £200,000 now. "Prices in 1983 were silly. Developers were building schemes, pricing their flats, and then almost immediately going bust," Richard Cotton of Cluttons says. The area probably saw the greatest price

nickname "Dogs" and now refer to "life on the island". New developments are concentrated on the Isle of Dogs and Surrey Docks, but there are relatively few high-quality flats on prime sites near the City.

Developers are building more expensive properties to cater for demand. Galliard bought Jubilee Wharf in 1994, a prime riverside site in Wapping, and plans to build £250,000 flats. Sam Chapman, from Savills Docklands office, says: "Developers are tending to build two-bedroom flats

Instead of studios these days." Mr Cotton of Cluttons notes that the quality of finish by developers has improved. They are now providing sensible rather than over-luxurious fixtures and fittings which buyers will no longer pay for.

Along with City professionals, new residents tend to be slightly older, aged between 30 and 40, and work in the area. Families are rare, discouraged by the lack of schools. The closer to the City and the river, the smarter the area.

The more people who work there, the greater the demand

for corporate rental properties. Knight Frank, which has touched rentals five years ago, now splits its business 50-50. There is now only one building in the nine-building Canary Wharf complex still to be let. BWZ is moving its entire operation — about 3,500 people — to Canary Wharf this summer.

"There is a huge under-supply of good quality flats to let," Mr Chapman says. Typical rents range from £175 to £220 a week for a one-bedroom flat and £250 to £350 for a two-bedroom flat.

RICHARD JONES, a financial adviser who has a ten-minute trip to the City, and his wife Julie, a nurse, bought their £79,995 flat at Sovereign View, a new development, last year. The mortgage payments were cheaper than the rent on their previous three-bedroom flat in Bermondsey.

The £30 million development on the Thames in Rotherhithe (London SE16) is now sold out. Mr Jones says: "We're investing in our own area, for the first time. It is very satisfying to think that ultimately we will own the flat. The rent was effectively dead money." Moreover, the developers, Barratt, paid £300,000 towards their legal and survey fees.

Mr Jones says: "Rotherhithe is a fabulous place to bring up kids. There are playgrounds, a City Farm, walks and nature reserves, and from our window we can see swans and passing boats." The Joneses even find the light at Sovereign View different. Their flat overlooks a particularly wide stretch of a curve of the Thames.

All 100 homes at Sovereign View have been sold ahead of the building programme and Barratt has acquired the adjoining riverside site, Pageant Steps, where it has started a further 63 houses and flats.

All 300 homes at Sovereign View have been sold ahead of the building programme and Barratt has acquired the adjoining riverside site, Pageant Steps, where it has started a further 83 houses and flats.

At the Vogen's Mill development at St Saviour's Dock in Mill Street, SE8, a flat cost £350,000 in 1981, £120,000 in 1992, and £200,000 now. "Prices in 1983 were silly. Developers were building schemes, pricing their flats, and then almost immediately going bust," Richard Cotton of Cluttons says. The area probably saw the greatest price

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● Empty Homes Agency, 0171-82
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2 7828

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Achieving a happy wedding day requires meticulous planning. Sarah Harding has advice on the most important decision: the dress

Dressed to say I do

The proposal has been accepted, the ring is on the finger, and the announcement in the newspaper. For a moment life is a bed of roses. Then the full weight of the nuptial preparations dawns: where to find the photographers, videographers, typographers, car, dress and tent hire, the balloons, Benthleys and bridesmaids. And what about the dress, the big frock for the big moment? When it was my turn last year, I opted to wear my mother's dress, a 1962 "Camelet" design that was all the rage 30 years ago. It saved fuss and fittings, but it didn't stop me from taking a peek at what every good bride is now wearing.

Across the Channel at the French couturiers, the finale wedding dress shown a fortnight ago at the spring-summer '96 collection of Christian Lacroix comes, in his office's words, in "white, white, white" whirls of A-line duchesse satin. Christian Dior's is tight-fitting; Yves Saint Laurent's a colourful muslin affair in white, green and gold.

Back home, however, Jasper Conran, who created the streamlined silk georgette and organza dress with ruffled bodice for Lady Sarah Armstrong-Jones's marriage to

Daniel Chatto, is finding that girls are avoiding frou-frou like yesterday's lover and bucking the couturier trend by favouring off-white.

This is supported by Caroline Castiglione, director of Castiglione (average cost of a dress £1,200-£1,500) which sells Conran, Jenny Packham and David Fielding — and consultant to Liberty's bridal department (average cost of a dress £450-£2,500). "Like Sarah Armstrong-Jones, girls want a very sleek, very chic, very simple style in ivory, a colour which suits the English skin tone," says Ms Castiglione. "Gone are the roses, bows and sequins associated with the dress that the Princess of Wales wore."

Cathy O'Neill, marketing and PR manager of Pronuptia (average spend on dress £300-£500), agrees: "Brides-to-be are certainly keen to ask to try on the sophisticated, straight lines. But once the dress is on, many change their minds. This is partly because it may



Trend setter: Lady Sarah Chatto

not flatter their figure: partly because a meringue-style A-line suits their long-held notion of floating down the aisle. This is particularly true, it turns out, if they come in with their mothers, who tend to have shared the same romantic dreams about their daughters.

So if girls will be girls when it comes to sticking to fairy-tales, do they still wear long, floaty veils? "Less so," says Ms O'Neill. "Brides are older and want less fuss. Also, with the increase in civil settings, such as hotels, veils are becoming redundant."

It is a sentiment shared by bride Lucy Dillon, who made a bare-headed descent towards the altar last June: "I did not wear a veil because I don't like the materials that they are made out of. It worried me, too, that I would not be able to see where I was going — a bit like when you're groping about in the murky waters of

bridal arrangements may be less frenzied from tomorrow until February 11, when Olympia, London, hosts the first National Wedding Show. Here all matters relating to the big day — including information about caterers, toastmasters, horses and carriages, disco hire, shoes, housewares, florists and fine wines — will be shared among 150 stands.

A 50ft replica church will provide the backdrop for a catwalk launching outfits for brides, bridegrooms and mothers of the bride, as well as going-away outfits, swimwear and lingerie. Designers include Berkelex, Elizabeth Emanuel and Hollywood Dreams.

Employees of *Brides and Setting Up Home* magazine will be on hand to provide tips from cost-cutting to etiquette, and *Wedding and Home* magazine is giving hair and make-up demonstrations.

Prospective grooms can relax in the "men's canteen" watching sport on television and drinking beer, or take note of waistcoats by designers such as Lee Lamont. Tickets cost £7 on the day; £5 in advance. To reserve a ticket, call 01733 890187 (quoting reference DX). Six people can enter for £20 if tickets are booked in advance.



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West End: 0171 437 6032
Victory House, 95-101 Regent Street, London W1R 7AB

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This is an opportunity to work for one of the Directors of a major US investment bank. You must have excellent organisational skills and provide a 1:1 secretarial service along with a team orientated attitude. Senior level liaison, Word for Windows, Excel and audio is desirable. Please call Annabel Bingham in the City.

City: 0171 377 9919
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RECRUITMENT

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Are you looking to join a market leader in the field of finance? Do prestigious offices, friendly colleagues, no huge hours and a steady role looking after two Partners (acting as mother hen to two Consultants), tempt you? If you are a team player who enjoys a degree of autonomy and have a minimum of 55wpm with a good working knowledge of Ampro - it could be time to move!

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Please send your CV with accompanying letter to:

Christine Williams MIPD
Engineering Council
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of busy, dynamic and fast expanding restaurant company based in Knightsbridge. Must have experience of Microsoft Word, Excel, Powerpoint and Access. Sense of responsibility and plenty of initiative essential. Shorthand a bonus. Minimum of 5 years experience in similar position. Salary circa £20,000 plus benefits depending on skills and experience.

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RAPIDA GROUP PLC

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for Chairman and Finance Director of private financial services company located in Knightsbridge.

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Salary negotiable upwards from £20k. Please send handwritten c.v. to: The Chairman - Box No 3475

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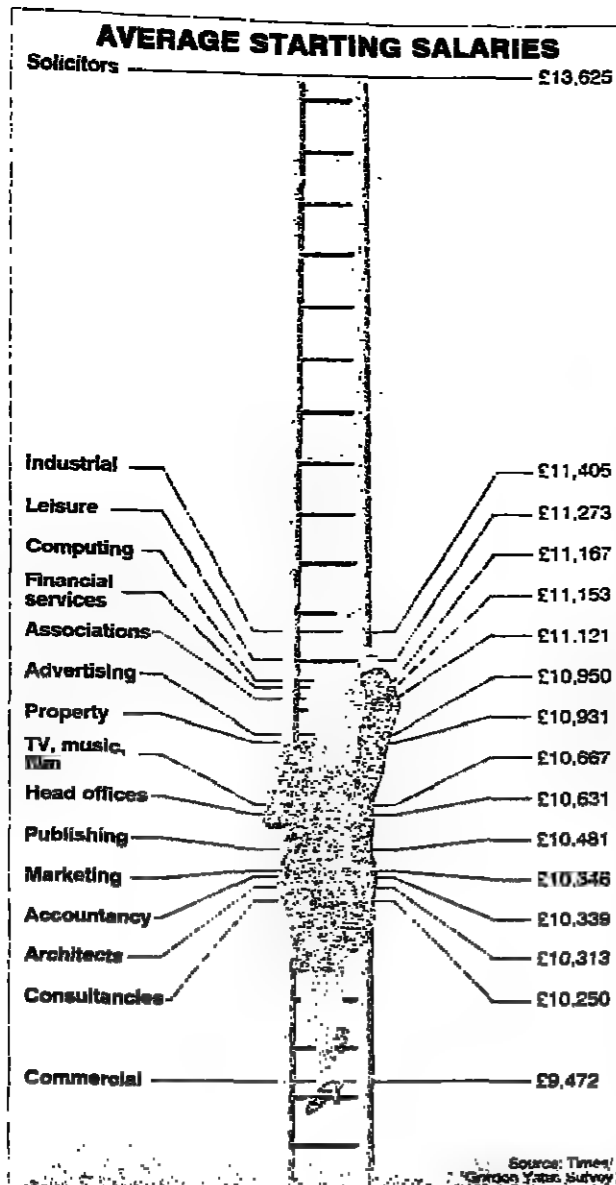
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Who earns what on the salary ladder?

Beryl Dixon reports on a yearly guideline for pay and benefits

Every year, in association with *The Times*, the recruitment consultancy Gordon Yates conducts a survey into secretarial salaries and conditions.

The survey is eagerly awaited by employers who often make use of it when conducting pay reviews. "It is seen as a guideline rather than a definition of going rates," Richard Grace, the managing director of Gordon Yates, says. "We find that many companies like to know that they are somewhere between the average and the upper quartile."

Average salaries looked like this:
 □ College leaver with less than one year's experience — £10,310 in small companies (those with fewer than ten staff); £11,012 in large companies (more than 1,000 staff).
 □ Junior secretary with one year-plus experience — £12,534 (small); £13,222 (large).
 □ Manager or team secretary (£11,118 (small); £19,336 (large)).
 □ Chairman, chief executive or senior partner level secretary £20,538 (small); £23,547 (large).

Salaries are 1.3 per cent

higher than the average in the City while companies outside central London pay 7.5 per cent lower. However, averages do not show the total picture. There are considerable differences between the separate business categories. Of those included in the survey, head offices came first in the pay ranking order, followed by solicitors. In general, the more glamorous industries are towards the bottom of the pay league. If you want to earn a fortune avoid publishing, the television, music and film industries and some public sector organisations.

Benefits paid on top of salary — which also vary — can add in an annual salary. Over time for instance, paid by one in five companies, adds 5.4 per cent to pay. The most common perks are still, as last year, season tickets, pension schemes and private health insurance. Life assurance, subsidised lunches and sports and social facilities come next.

The survey revealed few

surprises. "Salaries are coming on apace," Mr Grace says. "Not dramatically — the average increase was 4.1 per cent — but it is interesting to see which sectors are catching up after lower periods of recruitment. Consultancies, which are very responsive to the progress of the economy, are bouncing back. Small companies in the leisure, retail and marketing sectors — which were slammed by recession — are making up numbers, too."

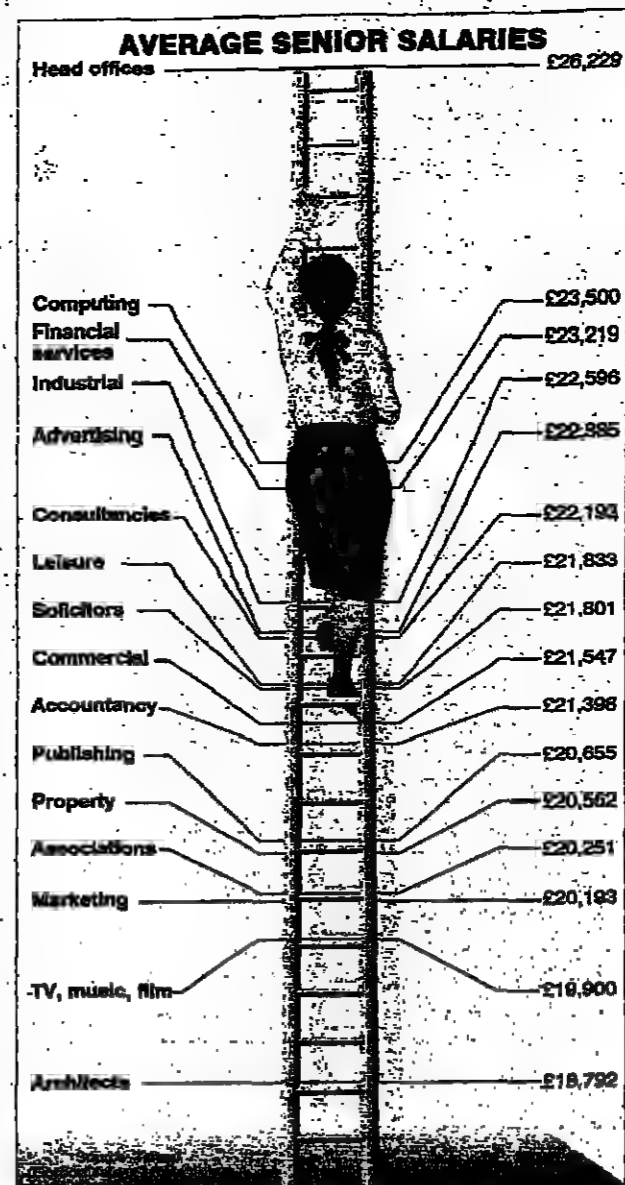
The survey did reveal some trends. Employers were asked to forecast growth in their payroll numbers. Consultancies forecast a 32 per cent increase. Leisure and marketing were also high, expecting to increase numbers of staff by 25 per cent and 20 per cent respectively. Solicitors predict an increase of 20 per cent. Right at the other end of the scale, television, music and film companies and architects predict no growth.

Few people choose an em-

ployer on financial grounds alone. Most choose a sector first, then plump for job satisfaction within it. Good working conditions and personal preferences regarding variety and responsibility take priority. However, everyone knows what their financial commitments are and also has an idea of their own worth.

If you wanted to use the survey as a pay bargaining tool you might have limited success — indications being that employers are still reluctant to pay premium salaries unless obliged to do so — but it is always worth a try, particularly if your job duties have changed so much that you think a salary review is called for. And of course, if you are considering changing jobs — and consciously seeking work in a different sector — it makes sense to establish what the pay range is before deciding whether you can afford to make the move.

You could also see where the jobs are opening up. Gordon Yates has asked employers to forecast their payroll numbers for some time now. Monitoring over the past few years has shown these to be remarkably accurate.



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13,000 people work in Canary Wharf, there are 12 restaurants and pubs, 32 name shops and several super health clubs. Canary Wharf is 7.5 miles or 12 minutes from Bank and will soon be serviced by the extended Jubilee line. Some of the best secretarial jobs in London are also in Canary Wharf. We currently have positions for first jobs, team secretaries, sales assistants, and top PAs. Top salaries, exciting benefits. Call Belinda on 0171-390 7000.

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£30,000 +
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Stylish, thriving financial institution has several vacancies for outstanding secretaries to support dynamic and demanding teams in fast moving client driven areas. These jobs call for those who have real energy, enthusiasm and drive. You will be expected to use your judgement to prioritise effectively and be confident working on your own initiative to demanding deadlines. Your full range of secretarial skills plus your ability to co-ordinate and organise will be essential to the role. Being a perfectionist you will be keen to produce work of only the highest quality to be recognised as a key team member. Corporate Finance experience is essential as are good audio/typing, shorthand and SP skills. A level 2/3 preferred. Age 23-30. Please call Karen Levine on 0171-390 7000.

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At Its Best!
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Dynamic, hectic and totally happening! Total involvement & lots of responsibility, very high profile, varied & challenging roles. Must be very energetic and lateral thinking, numerate and computer literate. Scope for development. Call Emily Aldrich.

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Contact Kim St. John if you want to Temp in the City

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International Management Consultants requires a professional, outgoing, experienced PA/Secretary to assist a Senior Partner mainly on a one-to-one basis. Enjoy a very busy and demanding role, organising extensive travel itineraries, meetings, etc; keeping a complex diary system; liaising with VIP clients, etc. If you are 24+ with a minimum of 3 years senior secretarial experience and have AmPro for Windows/60wpm typing along with excellent organisational skills, call MICHELLE SAYERS now. Ref: 9624.

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Supporting two Consultants within the Management Recruiting division of the International Management Consultants in EC4. This is an excellent opportunity for a bright, polished individual who has a minimum of 5 G.C.S.E.'s including English grade C or above. Duties include: arranging interviews, organising diaries, record keeping and copy/audio typing of correspondence C.V.'s, reports and proposals (separate of 60wpm). Call GILLIAN THOMPSON. Ref: 9627.

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A bright, outgoing college leaver or 2nd jobber secretary who is available to start immediately, initially on a six month contract with view to going permanent, is required to join this exciting, well established News Agency. Your day will be varied and involved working alongside a senior secretary. Duties to include diary management, travel arrangements, typing letters and reports using MSW4W, etc. If you are 17+ with excellent appearance and speech then call MICHELLE SAYERS now. Ref: 9624.

GROUP SECRETARIES £15,000-17,000 + Exe Package
Bright, friendly 2nd/3rd jobber secretaries are urgently required to assist very sociable and friendly teams within various departments of this Blue Chip organisation. Utilise your excellent typing skills (60-65wpm) when typing proposals, letters, reports, etc. These roles will initially be a 70-30 secretarial/admin content. Educated to O'level standard with a minimum of 2 years experience. Call GILLIAN THOMPSON. Ref: 9627.

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PARTNERS SECRETARY £17,000-20,000+Exe Package
A challenging and rewarding role for an experienced senior secretary to assist a Partner and a small team within this international firm of Management Consultants. Duties include extensive liaison with clients, arrange travel itineraries, keeping a complex diary system and lots more. If you are 22+, O/A level educated and have typing skills of 60-65 wpm then call GILLIAN THOMPSON now. Ref: 9627.

For further details of the above permanent positions, please contact our Consultants on 0171 621 1304 or fax your CV on 0171 628 9671.

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35 hours per week

This is an excellent opportunity for an experienced secretary/administrator to assist a senior, charitable housing association.

The work will involve normal secretarial duties, arranging and serving meetings, managing the office, systems and equipment and a variety of administrative tasks including correspondence.

Candidates will need to be confident and self-motivated with good organisational and communication skills. Experience of Windows word processing, ideally WPA 1+, essential. Knowledge of Excel spreadsheets would be an advantage but training can be provided.

For an application form and further details write to: Personnel Department, Affordable Housing and Support, Ltd, 2 Wilton Way, Wilton, Orton, OX4 6FE, or telephone 01852 704934. Closing date: 26th February 1996. Interview date: 12th March 1996.

Whether it is serving in the social or commercial environment.

Advance exists to provide housing and support services to meet the needs of people who have either a learning disability or a mental health problem.

CHELSEA GLAMOUR

You will need excellent Office Management and Secretarial skills, to assist this dynamic, hands-on MD, run a very successful creative agency. Small team environment, lots of variety and scope to use your initiative and become totally involved. Age 22-30, 50+ wpm typing, £17,000.00 p.a.

JOICE GUNDS
RECRUITMENT
0171 589 8887
(Kendall's collection)

SURGICAL SPIRIT!

We have two senior positions in a busy, West End private medical practice. As a PA/Secretary/Administrator, you will need to be energetic, well-presented, have excellent interpersonal skills, good audio/typing and copy/audio skills. You will be responsible for correspondence, general enquiries and general office administration. £14,000 p.a.

JOICE GUNDS
RECRUITMENT
0171 589 8887
(Kendall's collection)

TEMP TO PERM OPPORTUNITIES
Are you a temp and looking for permanent work too, you are currently have temp to perm positions available in various industries at all levels. Call Darren Smith at Tate Appointments on 0171 466 9424

RECKITT COLMAN

Reckitt & Colman is a worldwide manufacturer of household, pharmaceutical and food products with sales operations in over 120 countries. Its headquarters are located at Chiswick, West London where a superb opportunity now exists for an

IT Projects Administrator

This new role reports directly to the global IT Director, and will provide first class administrative support to this person and several multi-national project teams. Fluency in Spanish is essential. Important attributes include the ability to administer a large budget, an in-depth knowledge of graphics packages and excellent organisational skills. You will be a self-starter, creative team player with strong interpersonal skills, and above all, you will take delight in making a valued contribution to our business.

In return we will offer a competitive salary and benefits package, combined with real opportunities for self development in a truly international environment.

In the first instance please call our retained consultants: Arrangements on 0181-846 9500 (days) or 0956-877 321 (evenings)

RECEPTIONIST/SECRETARY

(to cover maternity leave)
Desira Company in W2 requires receptionist/secretary to cover maternity leave from early March. Assuming typing and significant telephone manner essential. Hours 9.00-5.00. Salary £11,000-12,000 p.a. According to age and experience. Please send or fax CV to Philip Harris, Smith & Milton Original, Broomfield House, 22 Junction Mews, London W2 2. Fax: 0171 736 1111

ASSISTANT MANAGER/ADMINISTRATOR

Excellent business experience for 'bright' first-jobber offered by small, friendly Sightseeing Company.

Applicants must have excellent telephone manner, masses of initiative and self-motivation, be highly organised and educated to A-level standard. Duties involve all aspects of running a small business. Send CV to: Maggie Rogers, Guidelines to Britain Ltd, 69 Albury Park, London SE21 8AA

High energy assistant to help mastermind one of London's most historic urban developments

SECRETARY TO THE DIRECTOR OF PUBLIC AFFAIRS

Over the next few years there are going to be some exciting (and historic) things happening at the Tower of London and its surrounds. Partners from the private, public and community sectors are cooperating to organise major economic, architectural and leisure developments which will see the area bloom as an attractive and thriving part of the capital. The Director of Public Affairs for the Historic Royal Palaces Agency, which manages this and a number of other historic buildings, is a key figure in planning, co-ordinating and promoting the entire programme - and assisting him is where you will come in.

Basically, your job will be as big as your energy and ability allow. For, in addition to handling the usual secretarial and office management responsibilities of a director's secretary, you will have every opportunity to get involved in planning and running the programme. This could mean carrying out

research, organising events, coordinating projects or generally promoting aims and objectives to local communities, bankers, business, developers, agencies and the media. In fact, the scope is endless for the right person.

As you will have gathered, energy, imagination and initiative are essential qualities for this exciting challenge. We'll also be looking for a minimum of one year's office (or business) experience and first class secretarial and administrative skills. It goes without saying you should be a confident communicator and organising, who can work with people from all walks of life and bring a high level of commitment to a demanding workplace.

In return, we can offer you a rewarding role and the opportunity to extend your skills and experience within exciting surroundings. The salary will start at up to £15,000 and there will be a number of generous employee benefits.

Interested? For more information, please telephone our 24 hour answer phone service on 0181 781 9770. Closing date: 16 February 1996.

Historic Royal Palaces is an equal opportunities employer

TROWERS & HAMLINS

SECRETARY/PA FOR PARTNER

Trowers & Hamblins is a large and expanding firm of solicitors based in Lincoln's Inn.

We are looking for a first class secretary, probably a graduate, to work for a senior partner in the Public Sector Department.

The job is interesting, demanding and rewarding. You will need to be able to work well under pressure and possess excellent communication and organisational skills. Legal experience is not essential.

We are offering a competitive salary together with a range of other benefits. To apply please send a full Curriculum Vitae to:

Miss Rebecca Martin
Personnel Officer
Trowers & Hamblins
6 New Square, Lincoln's Inn
London WC2A 3EP
NO AGENCIES

SCOPE UNLIMITED! (W3) £18,000 (+PKG)

MOVE OUT of a PA role & become the "right hand" of the young, dynamic PD at the heart of an IFT company. A potential EXECUTIVE, you are a "high flyer" with Excel & minimum taking ability.

CITY CHALLENGE £19,500 + Bonus
Working for a "mover & shaker" in a high profile new department this position offers the excitement of the BANKING world coupled with a genuinely fun & friendly atmosphere. Experience of producing presentations essential.

Please call Lisa or Rachel on 0171 636 1493

BEAVERS
Personnel Recruitment Consultants

H.R. Secretary

c.£18,000+ Exc Bens
This is a key role within a dynamic, international H.R. department which supports this leading firm of Management Consultants. You should have excellent secretarial and organisational skills acquired at senior level, and enjoy being initiative in a proactive, team environment.

Tel: 0171 734 7277
Ramblers Building, 1/5 Fife Place, Off Oxford Street, London W1R 1AH

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CRÈME DE LA CRÈME

APPOINTMENTS Bi-LANGUAGE

PROFESSIONAL
INTERNATIONAL
'TEMPS'

Excellent Rates + Superb Working Conditions

We have recently been awarded several contracts with prestigious, multi-national organisations.

You will have excellent secretarial skills (train, requirement 60 wpm plus in-depth knowledge of Word for Windows, Excel and preferably PowerPoint or other graphics related packages). A second European language is a distinct advantage and many of these assignments would particularly suit the age range 20-35.

Our clients hold 'temps' in high regard and are looking for candidates of equally high calibre with a wide range of skills, experience, personality and attitude.

The assignments are often an introduction either to a career as a professional 'temp' or, in many cases, a permanent job.

PROFESSIONAL CANDIDATES DESERVE A PROFESSIONAL SERVICE

Please contact James Murray, Charles Russell or Edward Wilkinson for further details.

11 PRINCES STREET, LONDON W1R 7TA
Tel: 0171 734 3380 / 335 7975
Fax: 0171 497 0548

BUSY CITY PR FIRM:
JOB SHARE
RECEPTIONIST/
SECRETARY

City PR firm need a Receptionist/Secretary following an internal promotion. Background in similar industry or financial markets useful; languages a bonus. Word for Windows experience essential. Good telephone manner, initiative, smart presentation, organisational skills. Hours shared between two applicants: 8.00am - 6.30pm.

Age 25 +
Salary: Negotiable.
Covering letter and CV to:

Miss Alex Hartley,
Binn & Co,
99 Grosvenor Street
London, EC2V 7NA

SECRETARY:
CORPORATE FINANCE
CITY BASED
- PACKAGE TO £25k+

Young and successful Fund management team seeks first class secretary to assist on transactions.

Minimum requirements:
80 wpm accurate typing
Microsoft Word 6.0
Powerpoint experience
Numeracy, initiative
Overtime and share of reception duties

Replies to: Max Lever, CWB Capital Partners
75 King William Street, London EC4N 7BA
(No Agencies)

Secretary / P.A.

Small but expanding unit trust management company requires person to work, answer the telephone and generally help make it a large unit trust management company. Age unimportant but enthusiasm and adaptability vital.

Salary around £16,000.

Apply to: Tim Miller, Managing Director,
Portfolio Fund Management Limited,
64 London Wall, London EC2M 5TP

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ST JAMES'S

LEARN NEW SKILLS AND REFRESH OLD ONES

Short flexible courses in keyboarding and Telex shorthand.

Software training at introductory and advanced level in MS Word 6.0 for Windows and MS PowerPoint offered on a regular basis.

4 Wetherby Gardens, London SW5 0JN
Tel: 0171 244 6700

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THE TIMES

1996 SURVEY OF LONDON
SECRETARIAL SALARIES

The eighth annual survey of secretarial salaries and employment conditions, compiled by Gordon Yates in conjunction with The Times, is now available.

Based on questionnaires completed by 475 companies employing over 125,000 staff, this year's survey offers detailed insight into the changes, trends and developments affecting secretarial and administrative salaries, benefits and employment in London and the UK.

The survey report runs to twenty pages of analysis, information and reports prepared in a readable, accessible style. It includes whole survey pay averages along with pay levels and employment prospects within sixteen different categories of business type.

This publication is freely available to anyone with responsibility for recruitment or employment of secretarial and administrative staff. To reserve a complimentary copy please forward your business card, or name and title on company letterhead, to Louise Brace at The Times, Advertisement Department, 1 Virginia Street, London E1 9BL.

GORDON YATES

Professional Secretarial Recruitment

DESIGN
£15000 S.W.6

The MD of a small, vibrant corporate design consultancy needs 1st class back-up from a young, well-organised secretary who's looking for real job satisfaction. Apart from handling all aspects of the business and running the office, you'll mastermind their immediate move to the West End. 50wpm W4W essential.

GERMAN MEDIA SALES
to £18000 S.W.5

The advertising manager of a go-ahead media sales company with German clients needs a bilingual media sales professional. You'll have 1 or 2 years' experience in advertising, media sales or publishing. You'll be enthusiastic, enjoy research and have fluent written English. Computer literacy essential. Age mid 20s.

Please call 0171 734 3380 / 335 7975

JIGSAW

PERSONAL ASSISTANT
to Operations Director

Salary £ Neg. Suburb

Game is one of the UK's leading retailers of multimedia products. In addition to excellent secretarial skills (including shorthand) you will need initiative, drive and a desire to be part of a winning team. The workload is considerable, but varied and includes research and project work.

Interested? Send a CV with current salary details to: Paul Lloyd-Roach at Game, Argent House, Hook Rise South, Surbiton, Surrey KT6 7LD

GAME

Game is an equal opportunities employer

GO GLOBAL! PA/EXECUTIVE ASSISTANT

£18-20,000+ Annual Bonus West London

When it comes to being at the forefront of international communications and commerce, our client, a global satellite communications company, is at the forefront. They are a business that is growing rapidly, and they are looking for a PA/Executive Assistant to join their team. The role is a challenging one, and it requires a person who is confident, organised, and able to handle a high volume of work. The ideal candidate will have a minimum of 10 years' experience in a similar role, and will be fluent in English and a second language. The salary is £18-20,000+ Annual Bonus. Please send your CV to the attention of Pauline Freeman, No phone calls.

The ideal candidate who is personable, organized and able to think ahead will find an exceptional package awaits.

The Chelsea Partnership
1 Chelsea Manor Gardens, London SW3 5PR Tel: (0171) 576 6242

Reception/Secretary

£15,000-£16,500

We are currently seeking experienced Receptionist/Secretary for a busy City-based company. The ideal candidate will have a minimum of 5 years' experience in a similar role, and will be fluent in English and a second language. The salary is £15,000-£16,500. Please send your CV to the attention of Pauline Freeman, No phone calls.

The Chelsea Partnership
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P.A. to Managing Director

The directors of an expanding international travel company in Kensington are looking for a reliable, capable and unflappable P.A. The job is very varied and is an excellent opportunity for the right person who must be fluent in written and spoken French, and who must be able to work independently. An excellent package will be offered to the successful candidate.

Please apply in writing, with full CV to:
Lucy Hatchwell, Mark Warner Ltd,
20 Kensington Church Street, London W8 4EP

Mark Warner

Architects, Kings Rd, Chelsea

PA/Secretary for partners in exciting, hard working, expanding office. Must be experienced, enthusiastic professional, unflappable with character. Other requirements are shorthand or Speedwriting & Microsoft Word 6 experience.

Hours 9am to 6pm Salary £21,000

Please call Alison on 0171 376 7525 and fax c.v details on 0171 376 5773.

RECRUITMENT

COMPANY

6 GARDEN STREET WICK 2AR

P.A. to Managing Director

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RECRUITMENT

COMPANY

6 GARDEN STREET WICK 2AR

MULTI-LINGUAL OPPORTUNITIES

BI-LINGUAL French native speaker for the Paris office of a leading international company. The ideal candidate will have a minimum of 5 years' experience in a similar role, and will be fluent in French and English. The salary is £15,000-£16,500. Please send your CV to the attention of Pauline Freeman, No phone calls.

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POP

Liverpool adds a musical, *Ferry 'Cross the Mersey*, to its new industry: marketing the past



THEATRE 1

Athol Fugard proffers a deep and subtle message for the new South Africa in *Valley Song*

THE TIMES ARTS



THEATRE 2

A fine production of *The Good Woman of Setzuan* cannot disguise the faded nature of Brecht's rhetoric



TOMORROW

A Little Princess, and all the other new films, reviewed by Geoff Brown

A splendid time is guaranteed for all?

As a new musical gets set to bring back Liverpool's glory days as the home of Merseybeat, Alan Jackson visits a city keen to cash in on its fab heritage

That relatively new phenomenon, the heritage industry, encourages every corner of Britain to aspire to theme-park status. At times, the marketing style is so mannered and discreet it is almost painful — witness Sissinghurst, where visitors scything their way through tasteful tea towels, pot pourri and superior jams may find themselves aching for the respite of souvenirs as unashamedly vulgar as a Vita Sackville-West fridge magnet or glove puppet. Elsewhere, the relationship between inspiration and self-exploitation is more bizarre: in Haworth, bodies weary from the climb up picturesque but steep and user-unfriendly cobbles may be revived by a Brontë-burger and chips, as well as the more traditional tea and scones.

'We're fools if we don't capitalise on our musical past'

It should come as no surprise, then, to those arriving in Liverpool as day-trippers — and 92 per cent of the city's annual £73-million tourism income comes from that Lennon and McCartney category — that a big wide world of Beatles-related opportunities awaits them. Sitting at a window table in the Lucy in the Sky café, situated in a mini-mall which rose from the rubble of the original Cavern Club, I scan a list of neighbouring retail and leisure attractions. Some are merely pun-inspired assaults on the passing pound, dollar or yen — Soleo For Men (shoes) or Top Knots (hairpieces, wigs and toupees) — but

most claim some connection with the Fab Four. Around the corner at the Cavern Pub, the pun-hungry visitor can order a Sgt Pepper Steak Sandwich or portions of either Give Peas a Chance or John Lemon Meringue Pie. Those with an appetite for proper mementos are to be found in the Beatles Shop, where a comprehensive range of memorabilia is on offer, ranging from rare records, photographs and posters to fridge magnets and glove puppets (although not, alas, tea towels, pot pourri and upmarker jam).

Those purists horrified by the destruction of the Cavern — it has subsequently been replicated here, and recreated in its original state, at the Albert Dock — would choke on their Beatlesburger. The importance of the group and, indeed, of the whole Mersey sound, cannot be overstated where tourism is concerned, says Mike Wilkinson, Liverpool's head of tourism, arts and heritage. "When you ask foreign visitors what they know about the city before they came here, it boils down to football teams and pop groups." Last week Paul McCartney was in town for the opening of the Liverpool Institute for the Performing Arts, and the level of excitement was phenomenal. It's my belief that we've previously undervalued — and underutilised — the impact that the Beatles in particular had. Wilkinson's post is less than three years old, underlining Liver-



Gerry Marsden, writer and singer of the hit, *Ferry 'Cross the Mersey*, and narrator of the eponymous musical about to open in Liverpool, takes a ferry across the Mersey

pool's new commitment to marketing itself as a centre of tourism. Working in alliance with various other regional bodies in the public and private sectors, he has created a three-year strategy which includes the promotion of the Cavern Quarter Initiative, within which local business interests are considering the opening of a Beatles-themed hotel and the creation of a Beatles trail, featuring actual discs sunk into the pavements, a la Hollywood Boulevard.

Pop-related tourism has developed a lot already, but there's quite clearly scope for a great deal more, he says. "New Orleans has jazz. We have the Beatles. It's definitely an important way forward."

Meanwhile, in a shabby rehearsal studio, the cast members of *Ferry 'Cross the Mersey* — *The Musical*

go through their paces for the impresario Bill Kenwright. "The best two hours I've spent since Everton beat the pool 2-1 three months ago," he says of the show, which tells the story of "a headstrong young Liverpudlian and his band storming their way to the top at the height of the Merseybeat boom".

The show has its premiere next week at the Liverpool Playhouse (of which Kenwright is executive producer), then sets off on a 14-venue regional and, possibly, pre-West End tour. "If you've got it, flaunt it," Kenwright says of the revenue potential of the Mersey pop legacy. "Just as Stoke capitalises on its potteries, so we must capitalise on our musical past. If we don't, we're fools. It's a key to our ability to

Downstairs, in Lennon's Bar, the revue's narrator-star Gerry Marsden admits to being humbled by the enduring success of a song that took him just ten minutes to compose more than 30 years ago, yet which has not only permeated the wider consciousness as an emblem of Liverpool's civic pride, but is also piped to passengers as the today's ferry service docks at the Pierhead. "I don't think the city ever really appreciated quite how big it was internationally," he says. "If it had, it would never have allowed anything so lunatic to happen as the demolition of its ultimate attraction, the original Cavern Club."

Now 53 and resident across the water in Wirral, Marsden claims that he and his Pacemakers never really appreciated the fact that they

represented a footnote to musical history. "Until Brian Epstein came along to manage us and take everything forward, we thought only of playing for enjoyment and, hopefully, making a few quid along the way. Even when we had our first hit (*How Do You Do It?* in 1963), we still thought we had no more than a five-year career. More than 30 years on, the same songs are still earning me a living. Amazing!"

And still earning him respect, too. The tourists queuing to take the daily Magical Mystery Tour of Beatles sites may comprise young, camcorder-wielding Japanese, but Lennon's Bar regulars still recognise a local hero when they see one.

A small group of twenty-something lads chanting about football are galvanised by

Marsden's unexpected appearance. "Respect due, man," says one, entranced, before extracting the star's promise to hold still until a camera can be found. "Please, have this one on me," adds unemployed Jason, buying a drink for a man who found success before Jason was even born. And "make sure you put forward a positive image of Liverpool — not the usual rubbish that's written," cautions his pal Stephen, on discovering a journalist is present.

"You see, they've got a great spirit here," says Marsden proudly. If the marketing men could bottle and sell such a commodity, they probably would.

● *Ferry 'Cross the Mersey* — The Musical is at the Liverpool Playhouse (0151-706 5363) from Monday until March 9

THEATRE: Fugard's touching portrait of new South Africa and old South Africans... bored by a bizarre double bill... Brecht's style without substance

Witness for the plaintive

Valley Song
Royal Court

Somewhere in his diaries Athol Fugard remembers the moment in 1968 when it hit him that his life's work was "to witness as truthfully as I can the nameless and desperate of this little corner of the world".

He went on to do just that, giving the world his observations of the human impact of pass laws, the destruction of shanty towns, poverty, displacement, police sledge, "immorality", acts, imprisonment and much, much else. In his unassuming, unpretentious way he helped to destroy apartheid — and with it, you might suppose, he ended his career as the great South African witness.

But the play he has written at the age of 63 proves that this is not the case. There are troubled people in the new South Africa, too, and fresh fears in need of a truthful recorder. Change, even positive change, is frightening. That is the message of *Valley Song* and, since Fugard has not only directed it but plays two of its three characters, it is surely a pretty personal one, aimed partly at himself.

On the face of it, *Valley Song* is an embarrassingly simple piece, couched in language that can venture little more than the banal. The outly close to the banal. The Cape Coloured called Veronica, a 17-year-old rural outback and home her singing talent in Johannesburg. The play is resisted by her grandfather, who lost his daughter and her mother to the big city, and gently challenged by a character irritatingly called the Author, a white Fugard-clone seeking escape from the whirl of the South African theatre in the same valley. It is yet another variation on

the tale of the child-in-search-of-a-future, but, as it turns out, more subtle and resonant than it seems. The Author wants to witness change, yet admits to a fierce nostalgia for the "unspeaked, innocent little world" that the valley once was. Fatalistic old Buks, as the grandfather is called, clearly feels secure with rigidities of caste that vex his spirit yet strike him as God-given.

Both old men believe in roots and fear rootlessness. Yet the play paradoxically suggests that roots trap and destroy as well as give nourishment and a sense of belonging, and that rootlessness offers the freedom to range and start again as well as the danger of loneliness and loss.

Nor is this an abstract dilemma. It is a matter of burning concern to Esmeralda Bihl's, appealing Veronica, who angrily rejects both her grandfather's suggestion that she work as a skivvy for the Author and the Author's prophecy that she will end up collecting wood on some veld, barefoot and with a child on her back.

She is a confused, optimistic adolescent — and the spirit of Mandela's young South Africa. She prefers to dream, hope and run risks rather than do the economically sensible thing, which is clean all-white houses for a living, as her grandmother did before her.

Just to add to the complexity, her ambition seems to be less to sing well than to make the sort of spoof-American noises she thinks will bring her fame and wealth. Like South Africa itself, she has



An appealing double-act: Athol Fugard as Buks and Esmeralda Bihl as Veronica

difficulties and disillusion ahead.

Does that sum up the play's conclusion? Probably not, given the many contradictions beneath its plain-looking surface. It has a ruminative, questioning feel, the more so because of Fugard's presence both as the sophisticated Author and, with a twist of the vowels and pull of the hat, the shrewd if illiterate Buks.

He is not a hugely gifted actor, but there is something about his tiny, bony, earnest face that grabs the attention and leaves you in no doubt that matters of real moment are being aired. See it, see him.

BENEDICT NIGHTINGALE

THE Gate theatre's inaugural Biennale Festival kicks off so inauspiciously it is almost stunning. I certainly glazed over long before the blokes in the bear and moose suits started lurching about inside the toilet cubicles, supposedly having it away with two bored housewives. That was presumably the outré/absurd climax of *Services*, Elfriede Jelinek's crudely feminist play about suburban Austrians' sexual urges.

This season of brand new European plays sounds promising, pioneeringly working against British theatre's insularity. However, it opens with an experimental double bill which is, one hopes, the pits, Jelinek's housewives and their chauvinist husbands, pulling in at a motorway café which is actually a sex joint for frustrated women, talk in a laboured style. The dialogue shunts between the obvious and the obscure.

Annie Siddons's cast, in *Day-Glo*

The bad and the ugly

Cat and Mouse (Sheep)/ Services
Gate, WI

Lyra, fail to awaken our interest by delivering their lines extra loud. The production suggests parallels with *Costi fan tutte* and Shakespeare's *Merry Wives*. But this brass modern effort is hardly on a par with its forebears.

Services is preceded by *Cat and Mouse (Sheep)*, an anti-play and satire of post-

Idea whose time has gone

BRECHT's notions of kindness and fellow feeling, inside or outside Setzuan, are at best peculiar, at worst nonsensical. Shen Te, the so-called good woman, gives food and tobacco to beggars, trusts thieves, and allows herself to be ruined because she never bothers to read the small print.

In fact, she is *The Simple-Minded Woman of Setzuan*, but Brecht does not call her out that he wants to make out that he is establishing a dialectic between decent humanity and ruthless capitalism. So Shen Te has to be described as good, while her cousin, Shui Ta, brought in to run the business productively, is hated by all.

The engine of the plot is that they are the same person: Shen Te invents the cousin to do the disagreeable deeds she can't bring herself to do in her own name. When one cousin is there the other is not. To adapt the words of the old song, you can't have one with the other. Man cannot be good and at the same time succeed in this heartless world.

The pity is that an idea which certainly contains more than an element of truth is

The Good Woman of Setzuan
Orange Tree

fleshed out with such thinly textured events, and placed in a story that guilefully calls things the wrong names. But this is how Brecht felt he could best present the argument in order to awaken the spectator's capacity to act.

More interesting than the play's argument is the style of direction that Sam Walters employs to demonstrate it, developing his own *Verfremdungseffekt* from his author's famous "alienation effect".

So that we shall not identify Shen Te with any one actress, all five play her in turn, handing over a shawl at the moment of switch, unless she is acting Shui Ta, in which case she passes a wide-brimmed hat and cane. Some actresses play one or both better than the others. Teresa McElroy made an impossibly sweet-natured goodie but her stern, unbending Shui Ta was the best of the baddies.

The production is described

as "promenade", but all this means is that the audience stands at the sides or sits on the floor. This is not greatly different from the ordinary arrangement, although more uncomfortable. The company of nine creates neat thumbnail impressions of the water-seller, the wastrel, the barber, the baby and others, and there is humour in some of the lines, or in the playing of them. The play was stylistically innovative in its day, but that style has passed into theatrical language and leaves the simple content isolated and exposed.

JEREMY KINGSTON

RSC
ROYAL SHAKESPEARE COMPANY
Allied Domecq

WORLD PREMIERE IN THE PIT
SLAUGHTER CITY
by Naomi Wallace

A bizarrely memorable play... a sardonic cri de coeur
Evening Standard

February 8, 9, 10, 12, 13
and continuing
Box Office
0171 638 8891



This production is presented in association with A&E, OnStage and RSC

KATE BASSETT



CHOICE 1
Roger Norrington steers the London Philharmonic through Berlioz
VENUE: Tonight at the Festival Hall



CHOICE 2
Rambert hits the road with works by Christopher Bruce and others
VENUE: Theatre Royal, Brighton, all week

THE TIMES ARTS



YOUNG ARTS
Anything the Second Viennese School can do, inner London schoolkids can do better?



OPERA
Stockhausen is back, with a few musical ideas about the future of world government

Listening to Alban, not Damon

Schoolchildren are learning to write songs like Berg rather than Blur, writes Hilary Finch



Pupils at North Westminster Community School in London learn how to turn their poetry into songs — and get them played

The young autodidact Alban Berg, at his compositional best on songwriting. On the basis that what was good enough for him was also likely to do the trick in north Westminster, the Wigmore Hall — which has increased young audiences for Lieders to an extent that German and Austrian houses still find hard to believe — introduced a songwriting project in four inner London secondary schools.

Each school received four visits over five weeks from a team of professionals. Berg's Seven Early Songs, with their challenging fusion of tonal, atonal and 12-tone writing, acted as focus and inspiration for new poems, new songs. Now the whole lot will be performed at the Wigmore Hall at the end of the project on Friday.

Schools don't come much grittier, or much more musical, than North Westminster Community School. Its 1,900 students are spread over three grim concrete sites. Twice a week, a group of 16 GCSE music students pass through a hefty security door protecting their precious keyboards, piano and computer.

At Hanson, head of music and jazz saxophonist, is ambitious for his charges. He has set up, single-handed and unpaid, Saturday Music School, attended by 70 per cent of his Year 7 pupils. He runs a string ensemble, a percussion ensemble, an improvisation class, and much more.

Now he was trying out his

latest masterpiece: Howard Moody (pianist), Mark Withers (clarinet and animator), poet Jo Shapcott — and Berg. Shapcott first. Berg's song *In Zimmer* ("Indoors") was the focus. So what was indoors? Home? School? A place to retire to, inside your own head? And how was it? What did it sound like, smell like? What did it taste like?

"Indoors smells like burnt toast. Indoors tastes like a charcoal roast. Indoors says I'm in hell. I reply, oh well." That was Jerome K. Jerome, for Laura Webb, "the sound of indoors is loud. But it smells suffocating. Indoors whispers stay. I reply: 'I'll see'."

For the own picture, the students selected the set of notes they preferred. Then, having drawn a single line tracing the shape of their own declaimed words, the line was transferred into the black notes. Piano and clarinet transcribed the written line into sound. Mouths gaped at the magic of transformation.

The following week, the song had to be fixed. Shapcott had distilled into a single lyric a potent recipe of images from each student. Every individual poem would be printed, in a programme book: several would be read out loud. But only one composite work would be fine-tuned and performed. Editing began: more performance now, with real showmanship and not a little choreography. Shapes were found for words, notes for



their way around two distinctive sound palettes of notes: one a gentle and comforting whisper of white notes, the other a more menacing mix of all-blacks. Moody and Withers played. Berg's own *Indoors*, Silence gripped the group. Rapping feet were stilled. "It's the difference between painting a picture and taking a photo, isn't it?" Hanson said.

Best is the end. After an exultant pulsed section reminiscent of Messiaen's *Cinq rechants*, the president concludes the session, and the parliamentarians leave the stage — all but one, the tubist of the basses, who dithers to right and left and finally remains alone. He manages to stutter out a remark: "Yes, and here would come the next scene."

Achim Hinkel was touching in this role: he and his colleagues in the choir of South German Radio, under their president-conductor Rupert Huber, were excellent all through.

PAUL GRIFFITHS

Stockhausen rises and falls on a point of order

vened by its president, who comes on to an empty stage, strides up to a high dais, and strikes a bell. Thirty-six singers then enter, chanting severally on the bell's note, middle D, as they take their places on platforms to either side of the president, who announces that the subject for debate is love. The voices continue to mingle and swirl, drowning particular features in docanons, thick textures and

MUSIC THEATRE
Welt-Parlament
Liederhalle, Stuttgart

amplification. The intention, Stockhausen says, is to focus attention on spirals of tone colour unfolding as the vowels change, but the bright bubble makes it hard to listen to such

effects with sufficient concentration. There is also the problem of the interventions, funny though these are. Every so often parliamentarians come forward to deliver themselves of orotund banalities in song. "Love is forgiveness," offers a sweetly uncertain bass, "Not always!" the president crisply replies, at which the nine tones rise with a unanimous "Ach, so!"

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PAUL GRIFFITHS

LONDON

CHAPTER TWO First night of previews for Tom Cope and Sharon Gless in one of Neil Simon's New York comedies. Cope plays a recently widowed author living near Central Park, inevitably whining towards Gless, a recently divorced actress living in less salubrious dwellings.
Glasgow: Sharnbury Avenue, W1 (0171-494 5055). Tonight-Feb 17, 8pm; mats Thurs, 3pm, Sat, 5pm. Opens Feb 19, 7pm.

MORNINGTON'S BERLIOZ Whether conducting the London Philharmonic (the case tonight) or his own period instrumentals, the London Classical Players, Roger Norrington can be relied upon to find a strikingly fresh approach to 19th-century music. Tonight he conducts a selection of Berlioz's music, including the *Royal Hunt* and *Siciliana* from *The Trojans*, the overtures *Les Francs Juges* and *Le carnaval romain*, and the sumptuous song-cycle *Nuits d'été*. Ann Murray is the soloist.
Festival Hall, South Bank, SE1 (0171-560 4242). Tonight, 7.30pm.

THE CHANGING ROOM Opening night for David Storey's fascinating play about a rugby league team preparing for the weekly game. James Macdonald gives the third in the season of Royal Court Classics.
Duke of York's, St Martin's Lane, WC2 (0171-436 5122). Tonight, 7pm. Then

TODAY'S CHOICE

A daily guide to arts and entertainment compiled by Kite Anderson

Mon-Sat, 7.30pm mats Thurs and Sat, 3pm. Unit Mar 30 (5)

ELSEWHERE

BRIGHTON Christopher Bruce gives another of his leading dancers a shot at the choreographer's "chair" with tonight's premiere of Didi Yvelman's *Out of the Box* (Voice of Celebration), for the Rambert Dance Company. Yvelman's piece is paired with Bruce's own *Swansong* and Mark Baldwin's cheerful *Barbaric Banquet*. Start of a seven-week tour.
Theatre Royal, New Road, (01273-326 481). Tonight-Sat, 7.30pm (mat Thurs, 2.30pm). Next week, Mar 1, 7.30pm. (01273-326 481).

GLASGOW The breezy American conductor Andrew Litton supervises an equally breezy festival of American music and arts — a *Like to be in America* — involving Scotland's two main orchestras, the Scottish Ensemble and Glasgow's Film Theatre and Royal Concert Hall Galleries. Litton conducts tonight's Scottish Chamber Orchestra, cooer of Caplan, Ives and Barber.
Duke of York's, St Martin's Lane, WC2 (0171-436 5122). Tonight, 7pm. Then

THEATRE GUIDE

Jeremy Kingston's assessment of theatre showing in London

House full, returns only
Box seats available
Seats at all prices

COMMUNICATING DOORS Backstage at the Leeds Empire in 1951, times are changing as old-style variety is replaced by new, young pop singers. Jack Shepherd's play catches the moment of change, directed by Jonathan Church.
Lyric Studio, King Street, Hammersmith, W6 (0171-741 2311). Mon-Sat, 8pm; mat Sat, 4.30pm.

THE FIELDS OF AMBROSIA (where everyone knows you) Preposterous American musical about love and the electric chair. Also as unpretentious as you can get.
Barnes, Strand, WC2 (0171-436 8888). Mon-Sat, 7.30pm; mats Wed and Sat, 3pm.

PUNNY MONEY Ray Cooney plays the man who finds a bag of bank notes in his latest role, Rodney Bennett is the newly hired taxi-driver.
Playhouse, Northumberland Avenue, WC2 (0171-436 4001). Mon-Sat, 8pm; mats Thurs, 3pm and Sat, 5pm.

AN IDEAL HUSBAND Turnabout night for Peter Hall's production of a comedy about a man who is a bit of a psychologist (Hamel Wylie) in Stephen

CINEMA GUIDE

David Brown's assessment of films in London and (where indicated with the symbol \otimes) on release across the country

THE FATHER OF THE BRIDE PART II (PG) Steve Martin leads the parade of his first. Steve Martin leads the parade of his first. Steve Martin leads the parade of his first.

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ENTERTAINMENTS

ART GALLERIES

DUNCAN CAMPBELL 15, Thackery St, W. Mon-Fri 10am-6pm, Sat 10am-5pm, Sun 11am-5pm. Tel: 0171 584 7506

OPERA & BALLET

LA BOHEME Tonight until Feb 17. The Royal Opera House, Covent Garden. Tickets: £15-£120. Box Office: 0171 584 7506

DANCE

SADLER'S WELLS 0171 715 8000. CORAZON FLAMENCO. "Memorabilia: The Great Party in the World". Sat 7.30, Sat 8.30, Sat 9.30

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FINAL FIVE PERFORMANCES



MUSIC 1

Mark Elder talks about Wagner, ENO, and where a top-class opera conductor goes next



MUSIC 2

A new trombone concerto by Toru Takemitsu receives its first performance in Scotland

THE TIMES
ARTS

MUSIC 3

Mahler's songs are presented in unfamiliar guise in an enterprising Nash Ensemble series



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See Sharon Gless star in Neil Simon's *Chapter Two* at our special Theatre Club prices

MUSIC: Richard Morrison meets Mark Elder as the dynamic conductor returns to ENO. Plus, concert reviews

Still high on greasepaint

There are many superb opera conductors around. But it is hard to think of any who could such a passion for the theatre — for all the graft, the guile, the greasepaint — as Mark Elder. His credo is simple to declare: "The greatest challenge for the opera conductor," he says, "is to strike a balance between theatrical and musical gesture."

But that is the challenge which has spurred Elder to his triumphs. Whatever the critics said about the more lurid English National Opera productions of the late 1980s, they agreed on one point: Elder's interpretations were electrifying. They surpassed most of what came from Covent Garden at that time, and little has happened at ENO since Elder's departure in 1993 bears comparison.

Now Elder is back, temporarily. At the Coliseum on Saturday he conducts a new David Alden production of *Tristan and Isolde*. Elder's experience of conducting Wagner is extensive: *Dutchman*, *Lohengrin*, *Rheingold*, *Valhalla*... and, as he rather bizarrely points out, "more performances of *Meistersinger* than any other living Englishman". But *Tristan* is new to him. "It isn't like any of the others. It has such a burning passion, first of all expressed as longing and pain, then exploding into that incandescent second act."

Back in 1970, fresh out of Cambridge and on the Royal Opera staff, the 23-year-old Elder — a prodigiously musical son of a Czech-Bavarian — had an amazing introduction to Wagner. In one season he assisted on the Ring, *Meistersinger*, *Parsifal* with Göttsdiner, and then conducted an amateur performance of *Flying Dutchman*. It was the kind of crash course that money can't buy.

"Yes," Elder agrees, "Crash and crash, I mean; I had a huge crash on Wagner. When you find this music for the first time it's overwhelming; a wall of feeling hitting you in a wall of sound. It seems more powerful than anything you have ever heard. I'm not saying that it doesn't now. But when you work on these pieces for years you learn where to turn on the heat, where to pull back, how

to make the singers sound well. You realise that you don't have to be in awe of these operas. They are theatre pieces like any other, and you have to get your hands dirty to make them work."

Elder spent nearly two decades at ENO, first as a staff conductor, then for 14 years as music director. The success of the relationship he built with ENO's general director, Peter Jonas (now running the Munich opera house), and the producer David Pountney, rather obscures the fact that when Elder first became music director — as a forceful and opinionated 32-year-old — he had to fight terrible battles internally at the Coliseum. Particularly with the orchestra, who dubbed him "the Ayatollah".

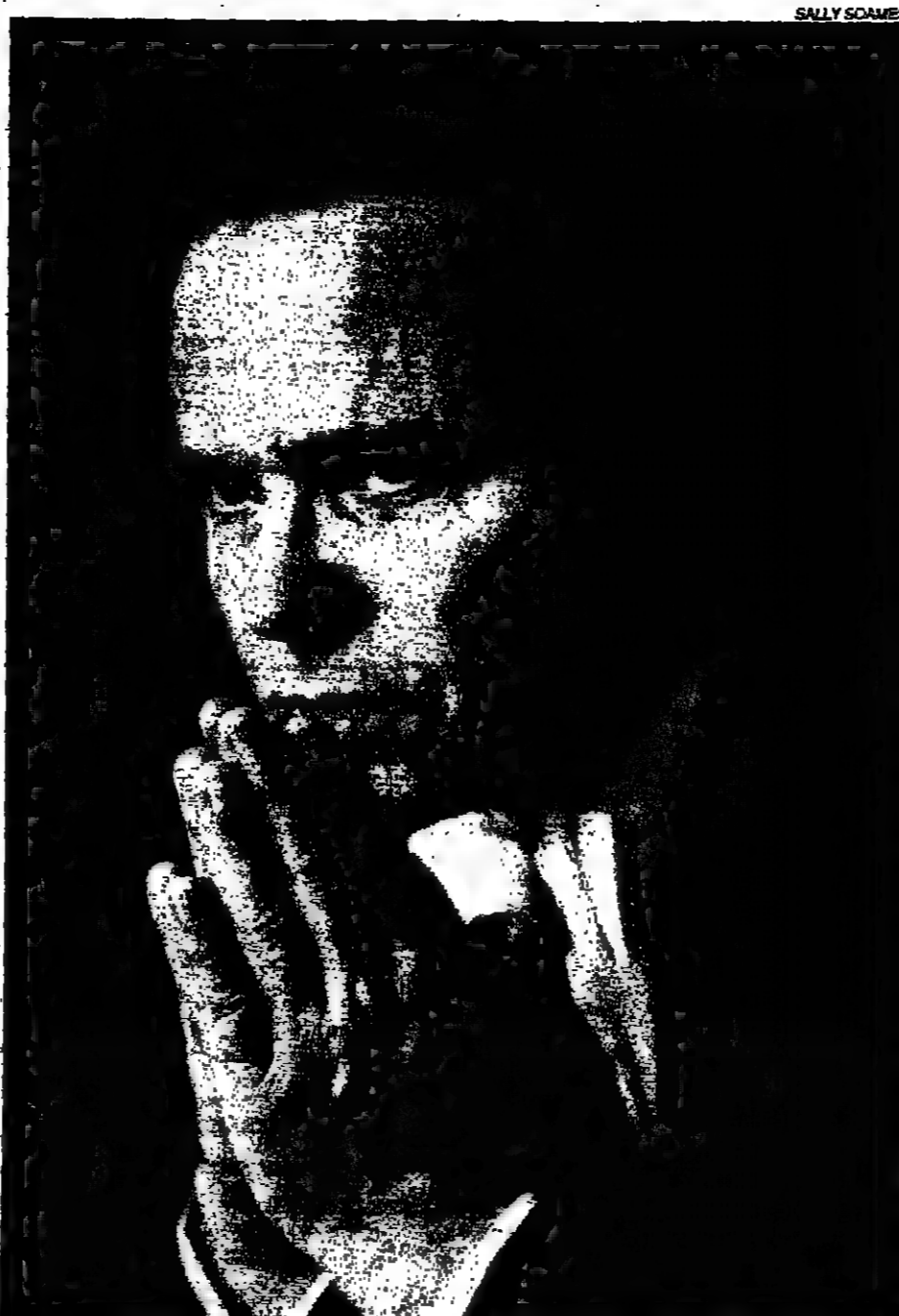
"Wagner? A wall of feeling that hits you in a wall of sound"

"That was because I wanted to change the way some of them felt about their jobs," Elder says. "You have to remember that in the 1970s it was possible for ENO orchestra members to pay other musicians to play for them. It sounds amazing now, I believe that the management had to control who was at any performance or rehearsal, not the players. It was quite a revolutionary thought for an orchestra to handle. I also wanted the same players to be present for all rehearsals and performances of difficult operas, like *Peter Grimes* and *Wozzeck*. Achieving that was the single most important way for the orchestra to develop."

When Elder left ENO appointed Stuart Edwards — hoping, no doubt, that this gifted young conductor would turn out as the young Elder had done. The experiment failed; Edwards resigned last autumn. "That shocked me," Elder says. "There are so few places in this country for a conductor to get experience of running an opera house. The music profession must train people to take on these roles. It's very tempting for a management just to hire guest conductors. But a real music director is someone who brings an attitude, a style and an aspiration to a company that is otherwise lacking."

Elder says this, and he undoubtedly means it. Yet for the past two years, since leaving ENO and then the Rochester Philharmonic in America, he has been nothing but a guest conductor — utilising his huge repertoire to conduct operas in Munich on no rehearsal whatsoever ("you have to go at it with absolutely no hesitation... and have luck on your side"), as well as at the Met in Paris, in Geneva and Chicago. At 48, he is belatedly carving the reputation in high places that his talents deserve but his intense loyalty to ENO delayed.

However, nobody who knows Elder can believe that he will remain for long without a permanent operatic post. It's too much in his blood. And the job looming largest is at the Royal Opera, Bernard



Mark Elder: "I would certainly consider it," he says, about the Covent Garden job

but a guest conductor — utilising his huge repertoire to conduct operas in Munich on no rehearsal whatsoever ("you have to go at it with absolutely no hesitation... and have luck on your side"), as well as at the Met in Paris, in Geneva and Chicago. At 48, he is belatedly carving the reputation in high places that his talents deserve but his intense loyalty to ENO delayed.

Haltink has said that he will relinquish the music directorship when Covent Garden closes for redevelopment. Would Elder, who conducts *Arabella* there next month, be interested? "I would certainly consider it," he says, with a glint in his eye.

That might seem odd. Elder is the quintessential Islington liberal: the man whom the BBC sacked from conducting the Last Night of the Proms during the Gulf War because he threatened to cut the patriotic songs. Covent Garden, on the other hand, is the very nest of Establishment privilege. Nevertheless, for Elder the

musical challenge would be irresistible to conjure for the Royal Opera the same sort of ensemble spirit that he achieved at ENO, but with the added bonus of international-class singers. And doubtless, where Elder went, the old chums Jonas and Pountney could be persuaded to follow. The prospect of the celebrated ENO triumvirate of the 1980s being transposed — lock, stock and super-co — to the 21st-century Covent Garden would undoubtedly delight some and horrify others. It certainly wouldn't be boring.

Tristan is at the Coliseum (0171-632 8300) from Saturday

Vienna on the verge

Nash Ensemble
Wigmore Hall

THE Nash Ensemble, in one of its most revelatory series, has been observing our turning century begin in Vienna: listening to the first rumblings of the First World War; straining an ear for echoes of an even earlier Vienna. Saturday saw the culmination of four months of offerings in a concert whose mainstream elements contained as much risk and surprise as did its stranger tributaries.

Mahler's orchestral songs have been heard, illuminatingly, as chamber music in arrangements made by fellow composers; and the grand finale was Reinbert de Leeuw's arrangement of the *Kindertotenlieder*, with string quartet, bass, woodwind, horn, piano, harp, and the voice of the young German baritone Matthias Göme. Göme's performance, feeding each word along tenderly and powerfully inflected lines, would have been remarkable enough in itself. But how revealing the piano-dappled lights of the first song; the

solo cello melting into the clarinet line as the voice rises into the second; the piano's strange, echoing football in the third.

This arrangement, which lit anew Mahler's settings of Rückert's painful poems, was in the tradition of the chamber-musical orchestral reductions played with enthusiasm at the concerts of Schoenberg's Society for Private Musical Performances. Erwin Stein's arrangement of Busoni's *Berceuse élégiaque* follows the same pattern: this sombre

lament for the death of Busoni's mother was given a haunting performance by Philippa Davies, flute, Michael Collins, clarinet, Ian Brown, piano, Catherine Edwards, harp, and Corin Long, bass, and string quartet.

This, together with a robust performance of Webern's early Piano Quartet — all ten minutes of it — were the rarities. But the central classic work, Beethoven's *Ghost Trio*, was every bit as remarkable in its way. The Nash has a healthy way of trying out new blood, and on Saturday we heard a new guest leader, Les Phillips, from the Chamber Orchestra of Europe. He and cellist Christopher van Kampen reacted to each other with meticulous sensitivity and, with Ian Brown's piano playing contributing to the unforced ease of converse, even in the momentum of the final *presto rondo*, this was a performance which will linger long in the memory.

HILARY FINCH

Trombone voluntarily

SCO/Varga
Queen's Hall,
Edinburgh

THE Scottish Chamber Orchestra has been excelling itself recently — not so much in performing standards, that is, as in programming. Only a couple of weeks ago it gave a most attractively compiled Spanish concert with the guitarist Sharon Isbin, and a few days after that it was accompanying Michael Collins in the first performance of Mikhail Pletnev's fearless arrangement for clarinet of Beethoven's Violin Concerto.

Since then the SCO has been involved with Christian Lindberg in the first European performances (in St Andrews, Ayr and Edinburgh) of *Fantasma/Cantos II* — which, unlikely concept though it might seem, is a trombone concerto by Toru Takemitsu.

The question was how the Japanese composer would integrate the assertive voice of the trombone with his characteristically fragile, minutely detailed, impressionistic or-

chestral textures. The answer is that he doesn't.

The orchestral part sounds like decadent Debussy, as though the characters of *Jour* had retired from the tennis court to a dance hall. They pursue their amorous manoeuvres in the new setting, but mainly in the background now as some Tommy Dorsey of a trombonist takes the stage with a sentimental number.

It is just the sort of thing which Lindberg, for whom the work was written last year, would enjoy. It is not so dramatic that he wasn't tempted to compensate by running back on to the stage of the Queen's Hall to deliver some aggressive encore of whoops and eruptions and growling

discords. On the other hand, *Fantasma/Cantos II* clearly appeals to the crooner in him. He probably also enjoyed playing the alto trombone in three movements allegedly drawn from a larger work by Leopold Mozart: an entertaining piece so idiomatically written for the trombone of a hundred years later that it is difficult to believe in it.

The concert began with Mendelssohn's *Hebrides Overture* and ended with the same composer's Scottish Symphony (No 3 in A minor). Though genially conducted in both cases by Gilbert Varga, neither performance offered the more necessary reassurance that the SCO has not declined in style, wind intonation and string ensemble while it has been ploughing through the more conventional programmes of the past few seasons.

GERALD LARNER

Second helping

THE TIMES
THEATRE
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NOTICE

AFTER two sell-out summer shows in Germany and Belgium, *Hot Ice* is set to hit Britain. The ultimate ice spectacular, *Hot Ice* features laser technology, music ranging from Gertrude to Queen, and a cast of champion skaters. Club members can buy two tickets for the price of one for shows at:

- Bournemouth: Pavilion Theatre, Feb 21 (7.30pm), 22 (7.30pm), 23 (2.30pm), 7.30pm. Tickets normally £8.50 and £18.50. Tel 01423 247297
- Liverpool: Empire Theatre, Feb 28 (7.30pm), Mar 1 (2.30pm), 7.30pm. Tickets normally £9 to £16. Tel 0151-709 1555
- Bristol: Hippodrome, Mar 6 (7.30pm), 7 (7.30pm). Tickets normally £9 to £16. Tel 0117-929 9444
- Leeds: Grand Theatre, Mar 13 (2.30pm), 15 (6pm). Tickets normally £6 to £14. Tel 0113-245 9361
- Nottingham: Royal Concert Hall, Mar 26 (7.30pm). Tickets normally £14, £16. Tel 0115-948 2626

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TO BOOK, please phone the listed number during normal office hours. The price printed on the ticket you receive will be the special price negotiated by the Theatre Club. There may be a transaction charge to cover postage.

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Coliseum Theatre
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● SAVE £3 on tickets (normally £8 to £12) for any Tues-Fri. evening performance of the tribute show, *Side by Side by Sondheim*. Tel 0161-624 2829

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● SAVE 25 per cent on tickets (normally £9) to the sparkling rock musical, *Godspell*. Tel 01733 52439

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WORTHING

Counaught Theatre
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● SAVE £1.50 on tickets (normally £5.50 to £10.50) for J.B. Priestley's classic thriller, *I Have Been Here Before*. Tel 01903 235333

Fitting tribute to Jones the brass

LSO Brass
Barbican

IT IS now ten years since Philip Jones packed away his trumpet for the last time, causing the world-famous ensemble that bore his name to rechristen itself London Brass. Since then, Jones has been Principal of the Trinity College of Music, but his retirement offered the opportunity for a tribute from some of the many players who have reason to thank him.

Before the founding of the Philip Jones Brass Ensemble in 1981, there was virtually no expertise in the medium. Nowadays there is a plethora of music from all periods to choose from, and the reduced ensemble managed some stylishly tapered phrasing.

One of the masterworks of the repertoire established in that time is Elgar Howarth's arrangement of Mussorgsky's *Pictures at an Exhibition*. The breathtaking skills called for by this showstopper may be found more widely today, but the handful of minor mishaps from these top players served as a reminder that it remains an extremely demanding piece. The scurrying semi-quavers depicting the market at Limoges were dispatched fearlessly, and Eric Cree's direction built to a magnificently climactic opening of the Great Gate of Kiev.

In an onstage interview, Jones commented that a greater variety of styles was expected of players in brass ensembles than in orchestras. A greater sensitivity to matters of balance and voicing too, he might have added. For this ensemble — an expanded LSO brass section — included the very same players who now

routinely blast their ear-splitting way through any orchestral tuttis put in front of them. Paradoxically, the exclusive company of brass players encourages them to listen to each other.

Inner voices were also heard to advantage in Christopher Mowat's arrangement of Bach's Brandenburg Concerto No 3. This is another skilful transcription that throws the three instrumental groupings into relief, and the reduced ensemble managed some stylishly tapered phrasing.

Whether Elgar Howarth's settings of early 17th-century English keyboard pieces (Byrd, Farnaby and Bull) can ever sound stylish on modern brass instruments is a moot point. For all the virtuosity with which the passagework was delivered, these transcriptions seemed more convincing the more they were removed from their original context.

Something that has always come a good deal easier to LSO players is the assimilation of jazz style, and the remainder of the programme was sheer delight: six movements from André Previn's *Triplet for Brass*, three from Jim Parker's superbly idiomatic *A Londoner in New York*, and Eric Cree's own arrangement of a suite from Bernstein's *West Side Story*.

This was masterly playing, and a worthy tribute to the man who made it all possible.

BARRY MILLINGTON

THE TIMES
PRESENTS
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Can a council ignore advice?

David Crawford reports on a case that will determine a county council's powers to adopt its own structure plan

Property professionals throughout Britain are keenly awaiting the outcome of a High Court challenge to Berkshire County Council's recently adopted structure plan, which is due to be heard on April 2.

The case concerns official housing allocations for the M4 county, but Douglas Evans, the lawyer leading a House Builders Federation (HBF) challenge to the Liberal Democrat/Labour-controlled authority, sees the battle as being about more than new homes.

"Though important, housing is in a sense a proxy issue," Mr Evans, a partner and head of planning at Theodore Goddard, says. "What is really at stake is the way in which a county council is using new powers to adopt its own structure plan and ignoring the recommendations of the independent panel which carried out the plan's examination in public [EIP]."

He sees this as a potential threat to a range of property interests throughout the county — in employment-related development as much as housing. But even without these wider implications, the 40,000 additional houses which Berkshire has eventually agreed should be built, mainly in Bracknell, Newbury and Wokingham, are being criticised as insufficient to accommodate natural growth during the plan period to 2006, let alone the influx resulting from new commercial development and job creation.



Gummer: intervention

The issue arose when Berkshire, which gained self-adoption powers under the 1991 Planning Act, originally proposed only 35,670 new dwellings in its structure plan on environmental grounds. The independent EIP panel, which reviewed the plan before the council adopted it last November, recommended 48,000 homes — 8,000 above the southeast regional guidance level.

The panel advised that the original figure, proposed to protect the county's "environmental capacity", was excessively biased towards such considerations. The total of

48,000 dwellings could be accommodated without overdevelopment, it said.

Local property professionals who agree include Ian Tant, of the Barton Willmore Planning Partnership in Reading. He says: "Even 48,000 homes would not meet the workforce requirements of committed employment land. Berkshire is the most extreme case yet of divergence from panel recommendations."

Chris Perry, resident partner at Vail Williams Reading office, fears that Berkshire "could become the poor relations among the south-eastern counties. Potential re-locators do their research, and housing shortages will deter them."

Supporting them are figures which show that Berkshire has existing planning consents for 11.5 million sq ft of employment space — enough for some 60,000 new jobs. Employment, too, has been rising countywide — from 334,800 to 342,100 jobs between 1991 and 1993 — despite regional policy attempts to divert growth to eastern counties such as Kent and Essex. The only movement in the controversy so far arises from last year's intervention by John Gummer, Secretary of State for the Environment, who directed Berkshire to modify its figure to one "not less than" the 40,000 regional guidance level, leaving the final



Evans: crucial issue

decision to the council. Berkshire's response was to comply with the direction and stick at 40,000.

The crucial issue, Mr Evans says, "is that, with self-adoption, the EIP panel system is now the only independent procedure for scrutinising draft structure plans and ensuring that wider public interests are considered. If panel recommendations can be ignored without good reason, then everyone in property is vulnerable to decisions over which there is no longer any effective external control."

The county council takes its

stand firmly on local issues, arguing that the 40,000 homes directed by the Environment Secretary are already more than the county can take without serious damage to its environment. "We have worked hard to balance the need for housing and employment with environmental considerations," says Keith Reed, county environmental officer, who is confident of victory in the High Court.

"But we didn't start our structure plan process with a clean sheet — there were already substantial commitments to employment uses. If we give in completely to market pressures, we risk damaging an environment which is itself one of the main attractions for incoming employers."

"We are being used as a test case," Councillor John Albinson, chairman of Berkshire's environment committee, says. "We will defend our right not to be pushed beyond what we have agreed, to satisfy the Secretary of State."

If the HBF wins, Mr Evans says this will be a "warning to other local authorities — and Hampshire shows signs of following Berkshire's example — not to take undue advantage of their power to adopt their own plans". If the HBF loses, both it and commercial developers faced with adverse planning policies will feel able to question the reliance to be placed on assurances which ministers gave on the preservation of the public interest when self-adoption was extended to structure plans in 1992.

RAF base for sale

THE former RAF Alconbury, four miles northwest of Huntingdon, is to be put on the market in April by the Ministry of Defence, with the prospect of its conversion to an international distribution centre.

Bidwells of Cambridge, appointed to prepare a marketing campaign for the 1,100-acre site, regards it as potentially the UK distribution industry's most significant site, Ian Hudson of Bidwells says. "The location of Alconbury and its air, road and potential rail links place it firmly in a European context."

For the first phase Huntingdonshire District Council planners prefer a 70:30 split between warehouse development and mixed development, including leisure and heritage uses. The former Second World War control tower and surrounding buildings have been preserved and could form the nucleus of a visitor centre.

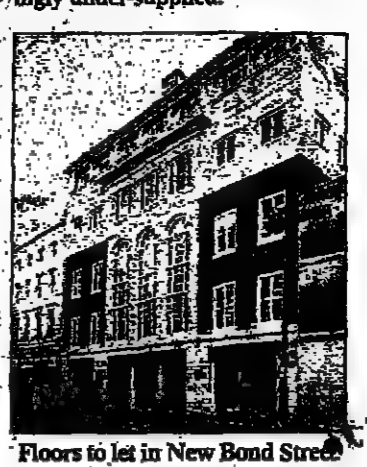
AN INNOVATIVE funding deal between Hanover United Property Trust and the Land Lease Group has enabled it to start to be made on the 12,000 sq ft Clockhouse Place office scheme at Bedford Lakes, Heathrow, one of the largest speculative office schemes in the region since the early 1990s.

Hanover, which bought Bedford Lakes from the Rutland Group in

1994, says the funding represents the first UK example of the Land Lease Group's solutions to property financing. Land Lease has agreed to guarantee the project's construction loan, arranged with the Royal Bank of Scotland, in return for a guaranteed fee and profit participation.

Healey & Baker and Strutt & Parker are seeking to let the building as a whole, or in two blocks. No quoting rent has been announced, but forecasts suggest £27.50 a sq ft for the area by mid-1997.

SPACE at the recently developed building at 159 New Bond Street, London, is to be offered at £35 a sq ft through Jones Lang Wootton on behalf of the landlord, the Swedish Life Fund Trygg Hansa. Three floors of about 7,300 sq ft each are available in an area of the market that is increasingly under-supplied.



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Department of Property Services
Lothian Regional Council
154 McDonald Road
EDINBURGH EH7 4NN
Tel: 0131-556 9242

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Interested?
Get me some information about yourself if you want to know more.
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Millionaire
France who guillotine Scotland
Thomson rail
Wattana lets Hick

Concern is voiced over intrusive cameras

One of the occupational hazards of spending hours alone in a darkened room watching strange documentaries is that you become peculiarly attuned to particular narrators. It's like acquiring a new set of friends - they only have to utter a few words and you pretty much know what sort of evening you are in for.

Let me introduce you first, meet the supremely calm Veronika Hyks - she normally means we are on BBC2 watching serious science. Then there's Jancis Robinson. Hardly needs an introduction these days - BBC2 again, could be wine, could be managerial micro-drama, normally some nice music playing in the background. Andrew Sachs, now he's more difficult - a sort of cross-channel utility narrator who can pop up anywhere with anything but tends to specialise in medicine and the tragedy of the human condition. When you hear Sachs, you know

you are not in for many laughs. Two of the Big Three were on duty last night and I'll begin with Robinson on the grounds that *The House* (BBC2) has become an almost unmissable event. That said, when Robinson opens with "Act two of Wagner's marathon opera, *Die Meistersinger* and the trumpet players have time on their hands..." you sense that Michael Waldman's wonderful series is beginning to run out of puff.

Last night, despite Robinson's best endeavours, the dramas were few and far between, Mike Morris, our man in personnel at the Royal Opera House, finally got a new agreement with the unions, revealing in the process "that the basic rate for stage crew was around £27,000 a year. At £200 a ticket, I made that three rows of front stalls per salary. Presumably, Jeremy Isaacs gets the circle."

What else? We met the barman who have spent the last 30 years

working opposite ends of the Crush Bar without talking to each other - "there's a sea of tranquillity between us". We eavesdropped on auditions for *The Nutcracker* at the Royal Ballet School, where young talent succumbed to trial by whispered asides. "Every performance will be different - she'll forget where she's going."

And we met Naomi, the pretty 12-year-old who was picked to play Clara for the opening night, didn't forget where she was going and danced beautifully. "Oh, I feel all tingly," trilled the school's principal from the wings. Bah, happy endings, can't bear 'em.

Actually, by that stage, we were in need of a few happy endings. A double dose of Sachs, a little earlier, had been conspicuously short of them. Sachs's duties began with *Great Ormond Street* (BBC1), a programme very similar in style to

REVIEW



Matthew Bond

The House but with a wholly different emotional impact. These are real, life-threatening crises and what we are seeing watching them escapes me. I have this ghastly picture of a BBC producer twinging up to fearful parents to ask: "Do you mind if we film your every move while you wait to see whether your daughter pulls through? We won't be in the way. Sorry, was that a yes or a snivel?"

Goodness knows what the Amjad family can have made of it, having flown in from Pakistan with their seriously ill daughter, Sarah. Perhaps all patients in British hospitals have film crews following them. Pretty soon, of course, they will have.

Sarah's story was doubly awful. First, because the original, very reassuring prognosis turned out to be horribly wrong. In tightly edited succession, Sarah went from "I can't promise, but you probably won't need an operation" to biopsies, ultrasounds scans, an operation, pathology tests, and eventually chemotherapy. The news was broken bluntly to her worried parents but nothing like as bluntly as it was to the cameras in the operating theatre. "I don't think it's looking good... it looks like a very nasty tumour... I wouldn't be too optimistic."

The second unifying aspect of Sarah's treatment was the struggle

her parents had paying for it. The cameras watched as an initial deposit of £4,000 (raised by her extended family) was quickly used up. "I can pay another £2,000 tomorrow," promised her father. The hospital, fairly but firmly, insisted on another £4,000. The treatment eventually cost the family £30,000. I wouldn't have blamed Mr Amjad if he had turned to the cameras and asked the BBC to pay for the film rights.

Sachs was back again later with *The Decisions* (Channel 4), a series that honours its promise to look at the ethics of modern medicine but often ignores the underlying science. Last night, the dilemma under consideration was that facing transsexuals, the unfortunate one in 17,000 trapped inside bodies of the wrong gender. The cameras followed three transsexuals travelling to Amsterdam in search of happiness, hor-

more treatment and radical surgery. But on the way we ignored several bits of important science. "Post-mortems reveal that the brains of transsexuals are the brains of the gender they always believed they were." No further evidence. "It is a very simple diagnosis." No further evidence. "Many children grow out of their gender confusion." No evidence and no quantification, which was worrying, given that one of our subjects was 13-and-a-half.

He had been born she, was called Becky at school, Fred at home but actually wanted to be Rick. He wanted Rick to be short for Richard but had run into parental opposition familiar to adolescents of either sex. His well-intentioned mother wanted Rick to be short for Reuben. "That's going to make my life even harder at school." I think he had a point.

● Lynne Truss is on holiday

- BBC1**
- 8.00am Business Breakfast (15552)
7.00 BBC Breakfast News (Ceebs) (48823)
9.00 Breakfast News Extra (Ceebs) (410538)
9.20 Can't Cook, Won't Cook (s) (3364674)
9.45 Kilroy (s) (345178)
10.30 Good Morning (s) (24991)
10.50 News (Ceebs), regional news and weather (308975)
12.05pm Turnabout (s) (353923)
12.30 Going for a Song (s) (34981)
1.00 One O'Clock News (Ceebs) and weather (4891)
1.30 Regional News and weather (786262)
1.40 Neighbours. Karl clashes with Malcolm (Ceebs) (s) (3445707)
2.00 Pebble Mill (Ceebs) (s) (3719910)
2.45 Hooters (s) (3363991)
3.00 Mootin' (5043025) 3.30 Sides (s) (5023262) 4.10 Ragusa (s) (s) (3944755)
4.35 Agent Z and the Penguin (s) (3944755)
4.50 Mootin' (s) (3363991)
5.00 Newsround (Ceebs) (5499295) 5.10 Blue Peter (Ceebs) (s) (1755194)
5.35 Neighbours (s) (Ceebs) (s) (364849)
N.I.: 5.35 Inside Uster
6.00 Six O'Clock News (Ceebs) and weather (804)
6.30 Regional News Magazine (484) N.I.: 6.30 Neighbours (s) (Ceebs) (s)
7.00 This Is Your Life. Michael Aspel surprises another unsuspecting personality (Ceebs) (s) (3129)
7.30 May to December: Until the Time for You to Go. In the last of the series, Aspel fears that Zoe has found a younger man; and Vera is desperate to get rid of her last remaining secretary. With Anton Rodgers and Lesley Dunlop (s) (Ceebs) (s) (368)
8.00 How Do They Do That? Eamon Holmes and Jenny Hill reveal more secrets of television and film. Plus stories of achievement from the fields of medicine, science, sport and entertainment (Ceebs) (s) (362623)
8.50 Points of View. Anne Robinson presents more viewers' opinions on BBC programmes (Ceebs) (s) (786723)
9.00 Nine O'Clock News (Ceebs), regional news and weather (5154)
9.30 Hatty Watkinthrop. Safe as Houses (Ceebs) (s) (586938)
10.20 Sportnight. Desmond Lynam, with Alan Hansen, presents highlights from tonight's FA Cup fourth-round replay, and snooker from the Benson and Hedges Masters at Wembley featuring an all-Scottish second-round clash between world champion Stephen Hendry and youngster John Higgins (s) (3101637)
12.25 P.M. Q.C. and Slings (1987) starring David H. Jardins, Neil Barry, Paul Dooley and Jane Curtin. Tremendous film based on a National Lampoon short story in which two hyperactive teenagers find themselves marooned in suburbia for the summer. They decide to wreck havoc in the neighbourhood and do everything within their power to ensure that the place doesn't become dull. Directed by Robert Altman (333886)
2.10am Weather (2550137)

- BBC2**
- 5.00am Open University: Computing (2001971), 6.25 The Planet Earth: A Scientific Model (2050804) 6.50 Open University (2050804)
7.15 See How They Grow (Ceebs) and singing (s) (5422029)
7.30 Silogary (s) (Ceebs) (302161) 8.00 The Risk (s) (Ceebs) (3082561) 8.25 Wishing (s) (s) (3487858)
8.40 The Record. Yesterday in Parliament (s) (4925708)
9.05 Daytime on Two: The Art (410552) 9.25 English Express (4293216) 9.45 Words and Pictures (437782) 10.00 Playdays (5555004) 10.15 Newsround (5555004) 10.45 Cats. Eyes (5510645) 11.00 Around Scotland (3399929) 11.20 Music Makers (7175688) 11.40 Moving to English (2701999) 12.00 TV8 (4402) 12.30pm Working Lunch (32533) 1.00 Geography (2210538) 1.20 25 25 (2211120) 1.40 Come Outside (3445849)
2.00 Wishing (s) (s) (3685738)
2.10 Snooker and Racing from Ascot. Snooker action from Wembley Conference Centre and live coverage of the 2.30, 3.05 and 3.35 races from Ascot. Includes News regional news and weather at 2.30 (586251) 3.55 News (Ceebs) regional news and weather (368599)
4.00 Snooker... the Masters. Further coverage from Wembley (s) (3378)
4.00 Star Trek: The Next Generation. Starring Patrick Stewart and Jonathan Frakes (Ceebs) (s) (253705)
4.45 The O.Z. Zone. Music magazine (s) (300910)
7.00 Video Nation: Life, Death, and God and Everything (210397)
7.30 The Avery. Classic cartoon (261465)
8.00 University Challenge. Second round. The London School of Economics v Keele University (Ceebs) (s) (3991)
8.30 Delta Smith's Winter Collection. In the final programme of the series Delta takes a selection of scenes and clips (Ceebs) (s) (2026)
9.00 Yes, Minister: The Moral Dimension. Classic comedy (s) (Ceebs) (3736)
9.30 Under the Star: A Caterpillar Moon (Ceebs) (s) (557281)
10.20 What the Papers Say (s) (483303)
10.30 Newsnight (Ceebs) (522991)



Historian Martin Warner (11.15pm)

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- BBC2**
- 5.00am GMTV (255568)
9.25 Win, Lose or Draw (s) (3276465)
9.55 Regional News (Teletext) (5555261)
10.00 The Time... the Place (s) (1716200)
10.25 This Morning (15674007)
12.20pm Regional News (Teletext) (6084939)
12.30 News and weather (Teletext) (3491674)
12.55 Shortland Street (s) (129216)
1.30 Coronation Street (s) (Teletext) (4703658)
1.50 Home and Away (Teletext) (5416579)
2.30 Chain Letters (Teletext) (s) (37552910)
2.50 Vanessa (Teletext) (s) (375552)
3.20 News (Teletext) (2095571)
3.25 Regional News (Teletext) (2094842)
3.30 Polonus Park (s) (1557216) 3.40 Widdowson (s) (s) (3492025) 3.50 The Twisted Tales of Felix the Cat (s) (3481910) 4.00 Terror Towers (Teletext) (s) (323) 4.30 Delta Wave (Teletext) (s) (157) 5.00 Garfield and Friends (2145722)
5.10 A Country Practice (s) (3419910)
5.40 News and weather (Teletext) (50755)
6.00 Home and Away. Dodge and Steven jump off a cliff (s) (Teletext) (35353)
6.25 HVT News (Teletext) (303736)
7.00 Wish You Were Here...? Judith Chairmen's through parts of New England. John Carter takes a city break in Granada, Spain; and Anna Waller finds out what self-catering in Portugal is like (Teletext) (s) (1307)
7.30 Coronation Street. Denis makes a reappearance. Does this mean that Ken will have a fight to keep Denise? (Teletext) (736)
8.00 Des O'Connor Tonight. Among his guests tonight are Merle Haggard and, still going strong, the Beach Boys and Status Quo (s) (3637)
9.00 Hollywood Men: The High Life. The programme looks at how brutal Tinseltown can be when you get older (Teletext) (s) (3533)
10.00 News at Ten and weather (Teletext) (3529)
10.30 Regional News (Teletext) (33649)
10.40 FILM: The Boogey (1983) starring James Woods, Sean Young and John Cazale. An intense and involving morality tale based on the novel Ludes by Benjamin Stein. A yuppie embarks on the road to hell when he turns to cocaine for a "boost." Directed by Harold Becker (3570981)
12.25pm God's Gift (551934) 1.25 Dear God (373304) 2.25 Bushell on the Box (s) (7550805) 2.55 Murder, She Wrote (s) (388038) 3.55 Coach (s) (2755576)
4.20 The Time... the Place (s) (1702392)
5.00 The Shadow Show (36750)
5.30 Morning News (20358)

No joy for Ken and Denise (7.30pm)

- As HTV West except:**
6.25pm-7.00 Wales Tonight (303736)
- As HTV West except:**
12.25-12.30 My Story (165858)
12.55 Coronation Street (3303465)
1.25 Chain Letters (34702936)
1.55-2.25 Home and Away (7901020)
2.25 Vanessa. A studio discussion on a woman's topic, chaired by Vanessa Feltz (57852281)
2.55-3.20 A Country Practice (3278658)
5.10-5.40 Home and Away (3419910)
6.00-7.00 Westcountry Live (44378)
- As HTV West except:**
12.55 Home and Away (3303465)
1.25 Chain Letters (34702936)
1.55 A Country Practice (34454910)
2.25 Vanessa (57953910)
2.50-3.20 Our House (3755552)
5.10-5.40 Shortland Street (3419910)
6.25 Central News and Weather (345552)
6.55-7.00 Life Line (416658)
7.25pm The Good Sex Guide... Late (2577750)
8.20 Jones and Jury. Two women sue a computer consultant over the sale of an exclusive lesbian mailing list (4408205)
3.45 Jostinder (100972)
5.20 Asian Eye (1212882)
- As HTV West except:**
12.55pm-1.25 Chain Letters (3303465)
1.25 Home and Away (34702936)
1.55 A Country Practice (34454910)
2.25 Vanessa (57953910)
2.50-3.20 Special Babies. Susie Thomson, the mother of two boys, goes into labour hoping for a girl (3785552)
5.10 Home and Away (3419910)
5.37-6.40 Three Minutes - FreeScreen (373194)
6.00 Meridian Tonight (200)
6.30-7.00 Birdwatch with Chris Packham (552)
5.00am FreeScreen (95750)
- As HTV West except:**
6.35 Think Tank (5185333) 7.00 The Big Breakfast (33533) 9.00 Fifteen to One (19194) 9.30 Out for Adventure (56113) 9.30 Schools (7527115) 9.45 Book Box (507200) 10.00 Stage Two Science (5857533) 10.15 The French Programme (851264) 10.35 Irish Writers (745193) 10.55 Film and Video Showcase (929397) 11.07 Schools at Work (367291) 11.15 The Mix (1712571) 11.30 Real-Test-Tel (720571) 11.45 First Edition (2704026) 12.00 House to House (35718) 12.30pm Wower (30129) 1.00 Slot Meltdown (32220) 1.30 Film: Buffalo Bill (5084991) 3.10 The Montel Williams Show: Long Distance Love (354811) 4.00 Bookends (455) 4.30 Ride On (843) 5.00 S Pump: Round Round (548194) 5.15 S Pump: Fall (979802) 5.30 Countdown (128) 6.00 Newyddion (100303) 6.15 Home (545200) 7.00 P.M. Q.C. (94571) 7.25 Dim and Omd (326774) 8.00 Dim City (1587) 8.30 Newyddion (7194) 9.00 Y Pwr (22033) 10.00 Bookends (85277) 10.30 E.R. Days Like This (85771) 11.30 Cybil: Look Whos Shaking (21028) 12.00am Film: A Pin for the Butterfly (9692494) 2.10 Dredd

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Meat Loaf live in New York (11.25pm)

The grandiose rock singer in concert at the Beacon Theatre, New York (471842)

Magoo's Westcountry Live (44378)

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ATHLETICS 43

CERON BACK IN THE CHASE FOR LONDON MARATHON HAT-TRICK

SPORT

WEDNESDAY FEBRUARY 7 1996

Cricket governing body steps into breach as political posturing adds to confusion

Walcott faces World Cup stalemate

By ALAN LEE
CRICKET CORRESPONDENT

AFTER days spent looking on in helpless frustration at the disintegrating shape and unity of the imminent World Cup, the International Cricket Council (ICC) is mobilising in an attempt to resolve the chaos. Sir Clyde Walcott, the chairman, and his chief executive, David Richards, leave today for Calcutta, where they will call together all the parties involved in the impasse over matches scheduled for Colombo, the bomb-torn Sri Lanka capital.

Last night, it seemed likely that the present state of confusion will remain until the weekend, when the players and officials of all 12 competing nations are to gather for the opening ceremony. Only then, three days before the tournament opens with a

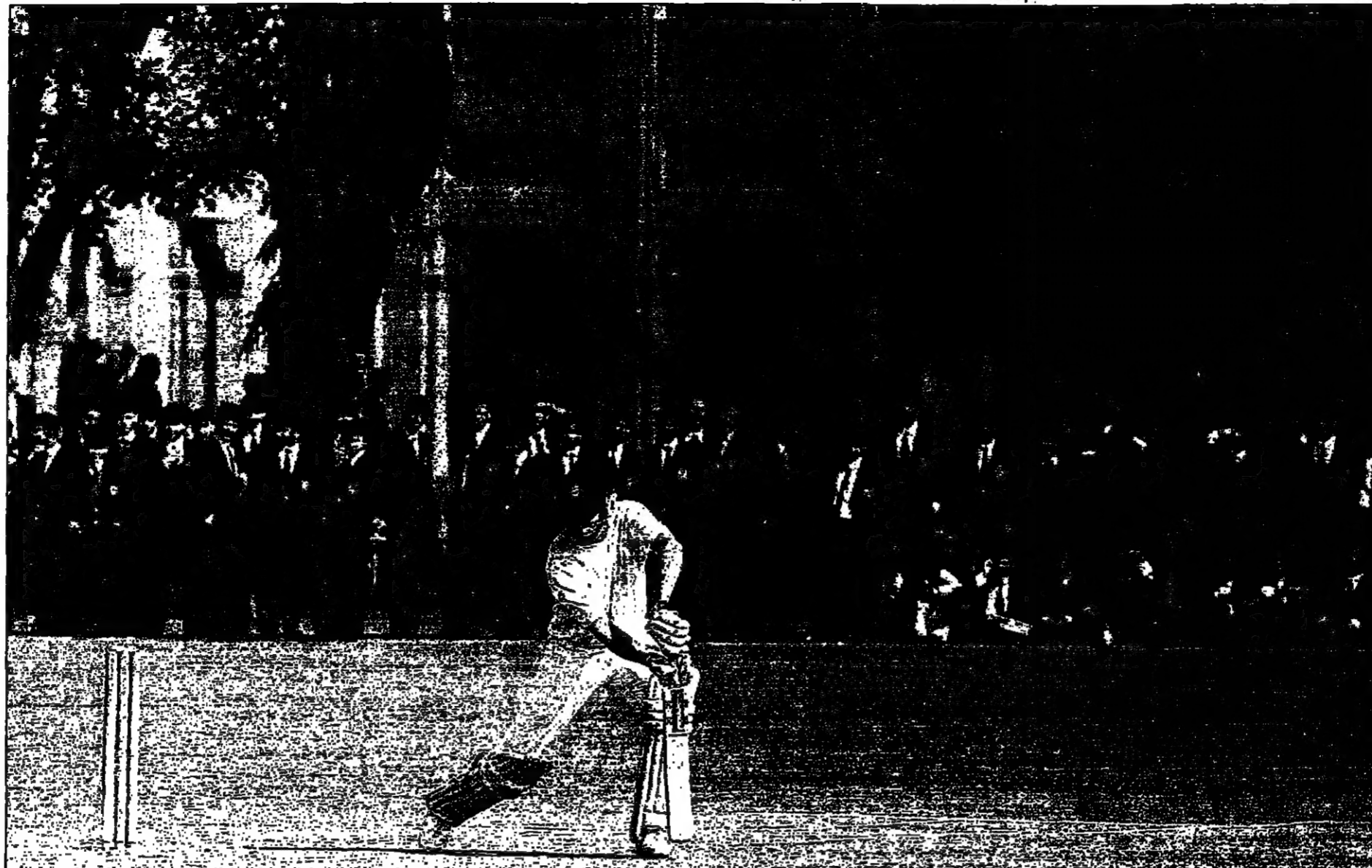
'It is Australia's blessing to be free of war. As a result, they have come to a dreadful error of vision. They think that cricket is actually important'

— Simon Barnes, page 46

game between England and New Zealand, will the ICC be able to convene the discussions it still hopes can repair the damage caused to the competition by the refusal of Australia and West Indies to play in Colombo, and Sri Lanka's reluctance to release the games to alternative venues in India.

The situation reached stalemate yesterday when Australia rejected Sri Lanka's renewed offers of top-level security and elaborate plans to fly them in and out of Colombo in a single day. Stung by what they see as divisive and uncooperative actions by Australia, the Sri Lankans insisted that they must still host the disputed fixtures and Pilcom, the three-nation organising committee, pledged that the games could only be moved with Sri Lankan approval.

Bizarrely, the ICC is officially powerless to act, having



Michael Atherton, the England captain, offers a batting masterclass to watching schoolboys during practice in Lahore yesterday. Photograph: John Giles

handed over control of the competition to Pilcom, but late yesterday Sir Clyde plainly decided that he could not indefinitely stand on ceremony while the game's premier global event fell into disrepute. A past president of the West Indies Board of Control, which on Monday decided that its players, too, should not visit Sri Lanka, Sir Clyde issued a statement from the ICC in which he admitted to being "extremely concerned by the overall situation" re-

garding the World Cup. And well he might be.

He added: "Very considerable efforts are continuing behind the scenes to find solutions to the present difficulties. I will be having further discussions with everyone involved in Calcutta over the coming weekend but, in the circumstances, it is not appropriate that the ICC makes any further comment at this time."

Doubtless, both Sir Clyde and Richards have been busy on the telephone over recent days, trying to loosen different parties from their adhesive stands on this matter. Now, though, they have decided that face-to-face debate is the only answer to a stand-off that threatens far more damage to the game than the disruption of two one-day games.

Throughout the winter, the ICC has been involved in legal arguments, first over the bribery allegations by Australia

players against the former Pakistan captain, Salim Malik, and then over a ball-tampering charge against the Sri Lanka team, which was subsequently mysteriously withdrawn. Now, the threat of litigation looms once more, with sources in Sri Lanka indicating they might sue for compensation if Australia and West Indies carry out their boycott.

Thilanga Sumathipala, vice-president of the Sri Lanka Cricket Board, said yesterday that he hoped all parties would continue to lobby by Australia and West Indies to change their mind. But he added a barbed warning about the losses that would afflict Sri Lankan cricket if they did not and said his board would look into "the financial obligations of the defaulting teams".

Those who feel most strongly about the issue would go so

far as to eliminate Australia and West Indies from the World Cup, while the alternative possibility exists that Sri Lanka themselves may withdraw if their fixtures are unilaterally taken from them. Sir Clyde is venturing into a diplomatic minefield which could fracture the already frail harmony of the international game.

None of this is being helped by the political posturing emanating from the host nations. Yesterday, for instance, Zafar Alfat, an official of the Pakistan Cricket Board, accused Australia of "trying to spoil the atmosphere through statements". He also suggested that, if Pilcom acceded to their request and relocated their Colombo fixture, they may still not be satisfied with the offered venue. "There is no end to it," he claimed disingenuously.

What is ever clearer is that

Pakistan, whose recent relations with Australia have been anything but cordial, will fall in behind Sri Lanka, even if the Indian elements on the organising committee wish to be expedient and move the games. Anil Abassi, chief executive of the PCB, said that fixtures were organised by Pilcom and added: "We stick by those arrangements."

Kenya, the fourth and last team due to play in Sri Lanka, confirmed yesterday that they would abide by their fixture list, but Zimbabwe, scheduled to play in Colombo on February 21, seemed less certain. Don Annot, chief executive of the Zimbabwe Cricket Union, said that he would continue to "monitor the situation".

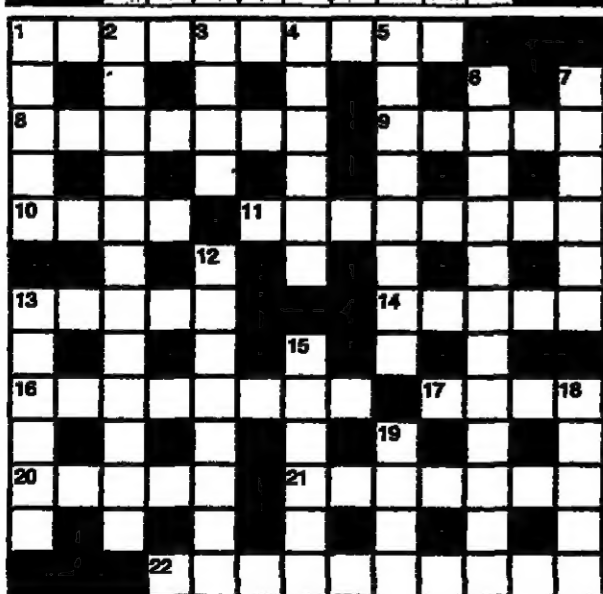
South Africa are not involved in the dispute, but Ali Bacher, managing director of the United Cricket Board, has come out in support of the organisers. "I understand the

actions of these two teams," Bacher said, "but South Africa would not have pulled out if we had been scheduled to play in Sri Lanka."

For once, England are approaching a leading event with the spotlight turned off. They enjoyed another practice session in Lahore yesterday at Aitchison College, Imran Khan's old school, and even the disclosure that they had kept quiet about a hamstring injury to Darren Gough made few waves. He is expected to be fit for the first match a week today. "Whether peace will have broken out in this troubled event by then remains to be seen."

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TIMES TWO CROSSWORD



No 698

ACROSS

- 1 Unfairly treated (4,4,2)
- 8 Select; identify (4,3)
- 9 Apparition (5)
- 10 Levy; ring (bell) (4)
- 11 Formal flower-garden (8)
- 13 Private road (5)
- 14 Junior office-worker (5)
- 16 Wife of Orpheus, lost in Hades (5)
- 17 Insect pest; privileged American (4)
- 20 Claude —, lily painter (5)
- 21 Non-believer (7)
- 22 Funny business (5-5)

DOWN

- 1 Buzz off! (3,2)
- 2 Digging one's heels in (12)
- 3 Condemn; fate (4)
- 4 Quite good (3,3)
- 5 (Threat of) force (3,5)
- 6 Comparatively inferior item (4,8)
- 7 Blur; hurtle (6)
- 12 Family feud (8)
- 13 Imagined; saw in sleep (6)
- 15 Anti-aircraft fire (3-3)
- 18 Tersely expressive (5)
- 19 Govt. vote-manager; dessert (4)

SOLUTION TO NO 697
ACROSS: 1 Race 3 Pabulum 8 Conive 9 Grail 10 Split 11 Odyssey 13 Melodrama 17 Languor 19 Salve 20 Cinct 22 Numeral 23 En garde 24 Spy

DOWN: 1 Racism 2 Gentleman 3 Preponderance 4 Buggy 5 Les 6 Malays 7 Lintel 12 Small arms 14 Assume 15 Cliche 16 Display 18 Usher 21 Nag

SOLUTION TO TIMES TWO CROSSWORD NO 693

In association with BRITISH MIDLAND
ACROSS: 1 Monogamy 5 Fife 9 Nursery slopes 10 Rhea 11 Empathy 13 Hawker 15 Tarsus 18 Slither 20 Flit 23 Lotus position 24 Rock 25 Wretched
DOWN: 1 Menu 2 North 3 Grenade 4 Mayhem 6 Impetus 7 Essayist 8 Flap 12 Whistler 14 Whittle 16 Afflict 17 Ardour 19 Host 21 Swish 22 Enid

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Orient dismiss drug ban player

By JOHN GOODBODY

ROGER STANISLAUS was yesterday sacked by Leyton Orient after testing positive for cocaine at the Endleigh Insurance League third division match away to Barnet in November.

Last week, Stanislaus, 27, the former Arsenal and Brentford defender, was suspended by the Football Association for a year. He is the first player to have tested positive for a performance-enhancing substance after a professional match.

Barry Hearn, the Orient chairman, said yesterday that he felt the FA ban was a lenient one and that the board had no alternative to dismissal to preserve the reputation of the club and "football in general".

The Orient directors had

agreed unanimously that Stanislaus had breached Football League regulation 63, section four, which covers "serious or persistent misconduct".

Hearn said: "The fact that Roger's version of events that led to him testing positive for cocaine was heavily contradicted by expert medical testimony has, in our opinion, left the club with no possible alternative."

Experts say cocaine can improve a player's performance. Dr David Cowan, the director of the laboratory at King's College London, which analysed the urine sample, said: "There is no question cocaine improves alertness. It can sustain stamina and endurance. It might also help a player through the pain barrier."

Hearn said that the "last

thing that a club wanted to do was to lose the £40,000 that Stanislaus cost us. However, there are much bigger issues at stake here and we have made it clear that Leyton Orient will not tolerate any form of drug abuse by any of our players. I hope our message is clear."

Stanislaus did not attend

New world vision 44

Rovers retreat 44

the meeting but Hearn telephoned him to tell him the outcome. Hearn said: "He expected it. He was resigned to it and took it in good grace."

Hearn said that he would be contacting the FA to urge the governing body to extend its anti-drugs measures. He believes that samples from entire

teams should be taken by officers of the independent Sports Council, instead of from only two players on each side. A total of 280 tests will be carried out in England this season.

□ Faustino Asprilla's transfer to Newcastle United is back on. Forty-eight hours after the £6.7 million deal had apparently collapsed amid accusations of bad faith, Newcastle and Parma confirmed yesterday that the transfer could be completed by the weekend (Peter Ball writes).

Negotiations were resumed by telephone yesterday afternoon involving Sir John Hall, the Newcastle chairman, Asprilla, the Colombia international striker, had said earlier after a training session in Italy: "I believe Kevin Keegan [the Newcastle manager] wanted me at all costs."

Positive signs of Modahl clearance

By DAVID POWELL
ATHLETICS CORRESPONDENT

THERE were fresh indications yesterday that Diane Modahl may have her name cleared of drug allegations by the International Amateur Athletic Federation (IAAF). She may even be reinstated without having to face an IAAF arbitration hearing.

The IAAF announced that, after a recommendation from its doping commission, its council would discuss

Modahl's case at its next meeting, in South Africa on March 24 and 25. The hearing, which was to have been the next step in the 20-month saga, has thus been put back a stage.

However, the arbitration panel may now not be needed. "If council has an opinion that it is not necessary to go to arbitration, theoretically it is possible, but the other alternative is just as possible," Istvan Gyulai, the IAAF secretary, said. "The case is referred to arbitration but, should this recommendation result in a different opinion of the council, the council has the right to change that referral."

Modahl was sent home from the 1994 Commonwealth Games in Victoria, as she was about to defend her 800 metres title, after failing a drugs test taken ten weeks earlier. She was banned for four years.

confirmed by a British Athletic Federation (BAF) disciplinary hearing. However, a BAF appeals panel lifted the ban, freeing her to return to competition.

Last August, the medical commission recommended arbitration but, having met within a week of the BAF appeals decision, it had no time to examine the evidence. Now the council has been called into the process after research by the IAAF's medical experts. This latest development suggests the medical commission may have reached a different conclusion, in line with the British verdict.

Ceron's mission, page 43



Modahl: hearing put back

RACING 45

HAS THE GRAND NATIONAL LOST ITS MAGIC TOUCH?

Big freeze tightens its hold on FA Cup

By RUSSELL KEMRON

THE FA Cup has not yet ground to a halt but its weather-beaten schedule is wearing. Although the Football Association remains optimistic of the fourth round being completed without too much delay, it said yesterday: "The situation is changing by the hour. It's a case of grit and bear it."

Two ties — Bolton Wanderers v Leeds United and Ipswich Town v Walsall — were postponed for the second time last night. Ipswich will try again at Portman Road on February 13, as will Bolton at Burnden Park on February 14. The matches at Shrewsbury Town and Swindon Town, due to have been played tonight, are off, as is the fourth-round replay between Port Vale and Everton.

Swindon try again on February 12 and Port Vale on February 14. Shrewsbury's meeting with Liverpool will now take place on Sunday, February 13, the weekend originally set by for the fifth round. The game replaces Shrewsbury's league match against Wrexham.

"Whatever happens, it looks as though the fourth round will eat into the dates of the fifth round," an FA spokesman said. The FA's nightmare scenario is if Grimsby Town and West Ham United draw tonight, which would mean a replay on February 13. The winners would play at home to Chelsea, but, because, police would require time to prepare the tie could not go ahead until February 21.

Leeds face the prospect of three knockout matches in seven days: a Coca-Cola Cup semi-final first leg against Birmingham City on Sunday; the FA Cup fourth-round tie against Bolton next Wednesday; and then, if they beat Bolton, a fifth-round FA Cup game against Everton or Port Vale on February 17.

In rugby league, two Silk Cut Challenge Cup fourth-round games, Whitehaven v Halifax and Workington v Widnes, were called off yesterday.

Racing at Ascot and Ludlow, scheduled for today, was lost to the weather. However, the Wolverhampton meeting has been switched to the afternoon track at Southwell. There will be inspections at Huntingdon and Wincanton today to see if racing can go ahead tomorrow.

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